

**FROM ORPHAN SCHOOL TO
POINT PUER: A STUDY OF THE
CARE OF VULNERABLE
CHILDREN IN VAN DIEMEN'S
LAND (1828-1833).**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of Bachelor of
Arts with Honours

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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university, and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no copy or paraphrase of material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is made in the text.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Skye Jackson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the main text block.

Skye Jackson

CONTENTS:

Acknowledgments	Page 3
Abbreviations	Page 4
Introduction	Page 5
1. Background	Page 9
2. Lieutenant Governor Arthur	Page 25
3. The establishment of the King's Orphan Schools	Page 29
4. The functioning of the King's Orphan Schools	Page 39
5. Failings of the King's Orphan Schools	Page 52
6. The establishment of Point Puer	Page 63
7. The functioning of the Point Puer establishment	Page 72
8. Failings of Point Puer	Page 82
9. Did The King's Orphan Schools lead to Point Puer?	Page 91
Conclusion	Page 95
Bibliography	Page 96

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ABBREVIATIONS

Full particulars of the following references can be found in the bibliography.

A.O.T. Archives Office of Tasmania

A.D.B. *Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1788-1850.* Volume 1 for A-H entries and volume 2 for I-Z entries.

B.P.P. *British Parliamentary Papers . Crime and Punishment : Transportation.*

The year of printing is first cited, then the volume number and the page number of the volume.

C.O. Colonial Office, London.

C.S.O. Colonial Secretary's Office correspondence

G.O. Governor's Office

H.R.A. *Historical Records of Australia.* The series number is cited first, then the volume number and page number.

K.O.S. mins Minute Book of the Committee of Management of the King's Orphan Schools

M.L. Mitchell Library, Sydney.

P.R.O. Public Record Office, London

S.W.D. Social Welfare Department

INTRODUCTION

Lieutenant Governor George Arthur established two institutions in Van Diemen's Land to care for vulnerable children. These institutions were the King's Orphan Schools and the Point Puer establishment for juvenile male convicts. The first was established in 1828, preceding the second by six years. There were enough similarities between the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer to make it plausible that there was a connection between the existence of the King's Orphan Schools and the foundation of Point Puer.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur governed Van Diemen's Land from 1824 until 1836. The colony of Van Diemen's Land had been founded in 1803 for strategic, mercantilist and commercial motives. In contrast to New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land's role as a penal colony was only a secondary motive in its foundation, but by Lieutenant Governor Arthur's time, the colony was largely identified as a penal colony. The colony became administratively separate from New South Wales in 1825 and from this time onwards, the Lieutenant Governor communicated directly with the British Colonial Office. However, the delay in communication meant that, in practice, power resided with the Lieutenant Governor since it usually took six months for a despatch to reach Britain, and another six months before an answer could be expected¹.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur certainly took the initiative with the foundation of Point Puer, sending a despatch to his British superiors which stated that he had founded this establishment one month after the event. The foundation of Point Puer was a major innovation in the management of juvenile convicts. A similar establishment was not founded in Britain for four years. As Point Puer came

¹Eldershaw, P. R., *Guide to the Public Records of Tasmania, section 2: Governor's office record group, 1816-1933* (Hobart, 1958), p.v.

before anything similar in Britain, the initiative must have emanated from circumstances in Van Diemen's Land. Perhaps the care of children in the King's Orphan Schools predisposed Arthur to found Point Puer. The King's Orphan Schools took in "orphans" in a very broad sense. These "orphans" were children considered to be exposed to morally depraved surroundings and therefore it was the function of the Orphan Schools to attempt to improve the rising generation and prevent the raising of future criminals.

Contemporaries in England, New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land perceived a link between juvenile delinquents and "orphan" children and it appears to have been generally accepted that "orphan" children became juvenile delinquents. Given this, it again becomes a reasonable supposition that there was a link between the care of children in the King's Orphan Schools and the foundation of Point Puer. Nevertheless, there has been no thorough investigation of connections between the two institutions. This is no doubt partly due to the division which exists between historians of the King's Orphan Schools and historians of Point Puer - the historians who study one institution tend not to study the other. The only exceptions are historians of social welfare, such as J. C. Brown who has linked the two institutions, in passing, when considering vulnerability to "moral contamination"².

The aim of this thesis is to investigate whether the care of children in the King's Orphan Schools from 1828 to 1833 led to the ultimate foundation of Point Puer in January 1834. This is integral to an understanding of the nature of Van Diemen's Land society as concern for the future of the colony was irrevocably linked to the nature of the rising generation. It was also during Arthur's Lieutenant Governorship that the system for managing vulnerable children was set and most of this endured until around 1850. It is even arguable that many aspects of

²Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.23.

Arthur's management of vulnerable children were more effective than those in place today. The Point Puer establishment was such an innovation in the management of juvenile offenders that a consideration of its origins is very important.

Most of the primary sources on the King's Orphan School and Point Puer are official. While these are excellent sources to have, they must be approached cautiously as the view they provide is one from "above", without a balancing view from "below" - there are no memoirs from orphan school children or Point Puer boys. The Minutes Book of the Committee of Management for the King's Orphan Schools is a valuable source for the functioning of the Orphan Schools, as well as for the Lieutenant Governor's attitude to this, as Arthur insisted on checking the book regularly and the margins are strewn with his comments. Colonial Secretary Office despatches, Lieutenant Governor's outward despatches, and British Colonial Office despatches relating to the Orphan Schools and Point Puer have also been utilised. Two other kinds of official sources that have proved helpful are reports of the Commissioner of Inquiry and *British Parliamentary Papers*. Arthur's papers and private journals of Port Arthur Commandant Booth, Port Arthur Storekeeper T. J. Lempriere and G. T. W. B. Boyes, Secretary of the Committee of Management for the Orphan Schools, have enabled a more balanced view. Other literary sources such as Arthur's *Observations upon Secondary Punishment*, accounts of visitors to Point Puer, newspapers and almanacks, have provided further insights.

Whether there was a connection between the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer will be considered by analysing similarities in the two institutions founding, functioning, failings and aims. To begin with, the background of the treatment of vulnerable children is dealt with. The second chapter focuses on Lieutenant Governor Arthur, while the next chapter considers the establishment of the King's

Orphan Schools. The fourth chapter analyses the functioning of the King's Orphan Schools. This is followed by a chapter enumerating the failings in the care of children in the orphan schools. Next, Lieutenant Governor Arthur's attitude towards juvenile delinquents is examined, and this leads into the next chapter on the establishment of Point Puer. After this is an analysis of its functioning. The ninth chapter enumerates the failings in the care of Point Puer boys. Next is a chapter on the linkages between the two institutions, which draws the work to its conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND

In England

Although the care of vulnerable children in England did not provide a clear precedent for the colonial authorities, the actions of the colonial governments must be considered in the context of their British background.

Juvenile delinquency was perceived as a major social problem in England from the late eighteenth century, but especially in the early nineteenth century when it was regarded as endemic to urban areas. The extent of governmental concern over juvenile delinquents was illustrated by the special reports it instigated into the matter. Children of criminal parents and orphans were widely regarded as likely offenders³.

Various societies were established to investigate and attempt to lower the rate of juvenile delinquency. One such society was the "Philanthropic Society for the Prevention of Crime, and the Reform of the Criminal Poor; by the Encouragement of Industry, and the Culture of Good Morals, among those children who are now trained up to Vicious Courses, Public Plunder, Infamy and Ruin", also known as the "Philanthropic Society". This society attempted to save such children by placing them in a special institution⁴. In 1816, a Committee of the "Society for Investigating the Causes of the Alarming Increase of Juvenile Delinquency in the Metropolis" issued its report. In this report there was a recognition that juvenile

³Tobias, J. J., *Crime and Industrial Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1967), p. 161.

⁴Pinchbeck, I., & Hewitt, M., *Children in English Society, Vol. II* (London, 1973), p. 429.

delinquents graduated to worse criminal activities, and that coming into contact with the worst criminals in prison entrenched the juveniles in this activity⁵.

The "Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline and for the Reformation of Juvenile Offenders" was founded in May 1818. The members of this society believed that a substantial reduction in juvenile delinquency could be achieved by establishing separate prisons for juveniles with a special system of reformation that combined education, classification and employment. After visiting special juvenile prisons around Europe, this society provided the British Government with a plan for a reformatory for six hundred boys⁶. It was not until 1838 that the British Government supported the establishment of such an institution and Parkhurst Prison was born⁷.

The 1828 Select Committee on Criminal Commitments and Convictions recommended a separate prison for boys with a special system of reform adapted for them. The Select Committee on the Police of the Metropolis, also held in 1828, likewise recommended a separate prison, but offered the alternative of a separate prison hulk if the cost of building a prison were too high. The Report of the Select Committee on the Police of the Metropolis suggested that after prison the boys could be sent to sea or to an institution like the Refuge for the Destitute at Hoxton. This Refuge catered for boys aged twelve to twenty years who were orphaned, destitute or juvenile delinquents. These boys were taught a trade such as tailoring or shoemaking and tended to be apprenticed to that trade after two years. The Refuge for the Destitute was funded by a mixture of private and government donations⁸.

⁵Report of the Committee of the Society for Investigating the Causes of the Alarming Increase of Juvenile Delinquency in the Metropolis, 1816, pp. 16-17 as cited in Pinchbeck, I. & Hewitt, M., *Children in English Society, Vol. II* (London, 1973), p. 436.

⁶Pinchbeck, I., & Hewitt, M., *Children in English Society, Vol. II* (London, 1983), p. 438.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 460.

⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 442-5.

There were two special prison hulks for juvenile male convicts, the *Bellerophon* at Sheerness and the *Euryalus* at Chatham. The *Bellerophon* was founded in 1823 and replaced by the *Euryalus* in 1825. It was maintained for this purpose until 1846⁹. The Select Committee on the Police was informed by the Superintendent of the Hulks that, of the 300 boys on the *Euryalus*, 101 were fatherless and 35 of these boys were complete orphans. The historian J. J. Tobias is justly cautious about the truth of these statistics as they were probably based upon the boys' claims¹⁰. The 1831 Report of the Select Committee on Secondary Punishments recorded evidence provided by John Henry Capper on the management of juvenile delinquents on board the *Euryalus*. According to his report the boys' day was divided between working at a trade and being educated. There was also an attempt to classify the boys¹¹. The *Euryalus* did not have a good reputation for reformation. A. B., an emancipated convict who provided evidence for the 1832 Select Committee on Secondary Punishments, stated that although it was good that the boys were taught a trade, the boys were "half starved to death"¹². One man who attacked the *Euralyus* for being unreformative was Brenton. In 1830 he opened the Brenton Asylum for boy convicts, vagrant and poor children¹³. Here was further recognition that these vulnerable children could be managed in the same way.

In 1827 George Holford, a member of the "Philanthropic Society", addressed a letter to the Secretary of the State for the Home Department which called for reforms in the management of juvenile convicts. Holford suggested an institution be established overseas which united the nature of an orphan school and prison¹⁴.

⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 447-54.

¹⁰Tobias, J. J., *Crime and Industrial Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1967), p. 161.

¹¹*B.P.P.*, 1831, vol. I, pp. 51-2.

¹²*B.P.P.*, 1832, vol. I, p. 61.

¹³Pinchbeck, I., & Hewitt, M., *Children in English Society, Vol. II*, pp. 454-5.

¹⁴Holford, G., Letter to the Right Honourable Secretary of State for the Home Department (London, 1827) as cited in Humphery, K., "The Remaking of Youth a study of juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis, University of Melbourne (1987), p. 91.

Transportation of juvenile delinquents had been authorised by a parliamentary act in 1718¹⁵. Juvenile male convicts began to be separated from adult male convicts on board convict ships in 1817 as a result of the Navy Board's recommendation. The separation enabled a concentration on religious and educational instruction for boy convicts¹⁶.

In early New South Wales

Management of vulnerable children in New South Wales preceded British reforms and probably impacted upon such developments in Van Diemen's Land.

The first orphan school was one founded by 1795 for female children on Norfolk Island¹⁷. Lieutenant Governor King had established this school and it was he who established a female orphan school in Sydney after he became Governor in 1800. In a despatch dated July 1800, King described the extent of the problem of destitute children to the Secretaries of the British Treasury. As most of the children in the colony were "abandoned to every kind of wretchedness and vice", King regarded it as absolutely necessary to remove the children from "the vicious examples of their abandoned parents". King intended to finance this school from duties on ships, fines and charitable donations. He informed the Secretaries of the Treasury that he had purchased a house to use as an institution, subject to the approval of the British Government¹⁸. King wrote to the Duke of Portland at the Colonial Office on the subject in September 1800. By this time he had appointed

¹⁵Cadbury, G. S., *Young Offenders Yesterday and Today* (London, 1938) as cited in Humphery, K., "The Remaking of Youth: a study of juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis, University of Melbourne (1987), p. 352.

¹⁶Humphery, K., "The Remaking of Youth a study of juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis, University of Melbourne (1987), pp. 83-4.

¹⁷Reverend Samuel Marsden to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 2 January 1796 in *Historical Records of New South Wales. Vol. III. Hunter, 1796-1799*. Edited by F. M. Bladden (Sydney, 1895), p. 1.

¹⁸King to the Secretaries of the Treasury, 7 July 1800 in *H.R.A.*, I. ii, pp. 524-5.

a committee to conduct the orphan school¹⁹. King enclosed a letter he had written to this committee in which he stated that there were 398 children out of 958 at the last general muster who were in need of care²⁰.

In March 1801 King informed the Duke of Portland that he intended to continue with the Female Orphan School "...as the only means of obtaining any reform among the inhabitants of which this colony is composed"²¹. This was a view shared by Reverends Johnson and Marsden also and was often expressed in terms of the "rising generation"²². King again acknowledged his belief that the orphan school was the only way of producing a respectable new generation in a despatch to Under-Secretary King dated 21 August 1801²³. The Female Orphan School had been officially opened four days before. In March 1802, King reported to the Colonial Office that the Female Orphan School housed 49 girls from seven to fourteen years of age. These girls were taught needlework, spinning and reading. Some of the girls were also taught to write²⁴.

Governor King did not have enough funds to establish a male orphan school. However, he did attempt to care for vulnerable boys too. In a despatch to Lord Hobart dated 9 May 1803, King wrote,

To lessen the evil as much as possible the convict boys that arrive (of which I am sorry to say there are a great number) are put apprentices to the boat-builders or carpenters, and several have made themselves very usefull²⁵.

Governor King thus linked orphan and convict children together. Perhaps he regarded the convict boys as a bad influence upon the orphan boys. At the

¹⁹King to the Duke of Portland, 19 September 1800 in *H.R.A.*, I. ii, pp. 532-3.

²⁰King to Johnson and others, 7 August 1800 in *H.R.A.*, I. ii, pp. 534-7.

²¹King to the Duke of Portland, 10 March 1801 in *H.R.A.*, I. iii, p. 13.

²²Cleverley, J. F., *The first generation. School and society in early Australia* (Sydney, 1971), p.10.

²³King to Under-Secretary King, 21 August 1801, as cited in *ibid.*, p. 244.

²⁴Governor King to the Duke of Portland, 1 March 1802, as cited in Cleverley, J. F., *The first generation. School and society in early Australia* (Sydney, 1971), p. 425.

²⁵Governor King to Lord Hobart, 9 May 1803 in *H.R.A.*, I. iv, pp. 81-2.

beginning of 1805, three girls who had attended the Female Orphan School had been apprenticed and another three had been married²⁶. The girls were probably apprenticed to officers' wives as this is what happened to more girls in 1805²⁷. Governor Hunter told the Select Committee on Transportation in 1812 of an even closer link between juvenile convicts and orphans when he said that juvenile female convicts tended to be placed in the Orphan School²⁸.

It was Governor Macquarie who established a Male Orphan School on 1 January 1819. At this time, there were enough funds to run the two schools. Macquarie also formed regulations for the management of both institutions²⁹. In a despatch dated 27 July 1822, Governor Macquarie not only informed Bathurst how the male orphans were instructed, but also enclosed specimens of their work. The boys were taught reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as some "simple" and "useful" trades which were regarded as suitable for their age, such as tailoring and shoemaking³⁰. Macquarie ordered the girls to be apprenticed as servants to families of good character at age thirteen. The boys were to be apprenticed to qualified mechanics of good character, or to farmers and settlers as servants, at age fifteen³¹.

²⁶Noted on the statement of receipts and disbursements on account of the Gaol and Orphan Fund, August 1800-December 31 1804, enclosed in a despatch from Governor King to Lord Hobart, 13 January 1805 in *H.R.A.*, I, v, p. 282.

²⁷Statement of receipts and disbursements on account of the Orphan Fund, January-31 December 1805, enclosed in a despatch from Governor King to Windham, 12 August 1806 in *H.R.A.*, I, v, p. 763.

²⁸Breusch, H., "Childhood as an Ideological Construct. The Official Definition of Childhood in the Colony of N.S.W. 1788-1825c.", B.A. (Hons.) thesis, Department of Sociology, ANU, p. 50: as cited in Humphery, K., "The Remaking of Youth a study of juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis, University of Melbourne (1987), p. 83.

²⁹Governor Macquarie to Bathurst, 24 March 1819 in *H.R.A.*, I, x, p. 94.

³⁰Governor Macquarie to Bathurst, 27 July 1822 in *H.R.A.*, I, x, pp. 678-9.

³¹Ramsland, J., *Children of the Back Lanes. Destitute and neglected children in colonial New South Wales* (NSW, 1986), p. 14.

In 1819 John Thomas Bigge was commissioned to inquire into the state of the colonies³². The House of Commons printed his report into the state of the colony of New South Wales in 1822. In this report, Commissioner Bigge commented upon the establishment of a separate barracks for convict boys within the Carters' Barracks. This was implemented in 1820 when selected boys under the age of sixteen were assigned to be trained for three years as government apprentices³³. Bigge praised the Carters Barracks as the "...best conducted of all the convict establishments in New South Wales"³⁴. Commissioner Bigge was very perceptive to note that this was the case because of the attention of the chief engineer and superintendent, as well as the barracks not being overcrowded³⁵. The boys were employed in the lumber yard and dock yard and separated from the adult convicts when they were not working³⁶. Bigge recommended that convict boys under the age of sixteen be strictly confined to the Carters Barracks, where they could be educated and taught a trade so that they could afterwards be assigned to settlers³⁷. Judging by an 1826 report on the Carters Barracks, Bigge's recommendations were followed. This report stated that a hundred Protestant boys could be accommodated in the barracks, where they were educated (in religion, reading writing and arithmetic) and taught a trade. Boys learnt to be carpenters, wheelwrights, coopers, blacksmiths, nailers, harness-makers, shoemakers, ropemakers, tailors, gardeners and millers³⁸. The boys were educated by a monitorial system, whereby the best pupils helped to teach the other boys³⁹. In December 1833 the superintendent informed the Principal Superintendent of Convicts that

³²Bigge, J. T., *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales* (London, 1822), facsimile edition (Adelaide, 1966), p. 4.

³³Earnshaw, B., "The Convict Apprentices 1820-1838", *Push from the Bush* 5 (December 1979), p.82.

³⁴Bigge, J.T., *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales* (London, 1822), facsimile edition (Adelaide, 1966), p. 24.

³⁵*Ibid.*

³⁶*Ibid.*, p. 27.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 163.

³⁸N.S.W. State Archives 1159 (microfilm reel no. 600) as cited in Earnshaw, B., "The Convict Apprentices 1820-1838", *Push from the Bush* 5 (December 1979), p. 83.

³⁹Earnshaw, B., "The Convict Apprentices 1820-1838", *Push from the Bush* 5 (December 1979), pp. 84-5.

the barracks were overcrowded⁴⁰. From March 1833 responsibility for the convict boys tended to be given to employers who applied for them⁴¹. As the demand for convict boys exceeded the supply, the Carters Barracks was converted into a house of correction in May 1834 and stopped functioning altogether as an establishment for convict boys in the following year⁴². Meanwhile, the plight and care of convict boys in Van Diemen's Land was moving in an opposite direction.

The House of Commons printed Bigge's report on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales in 1823. A short appraisal of the state of education was included. He quoted that the object of the Male Orphan School, as stated in its rules and regulations, was

To relieve, protect and provide with lodging, clothing, food, and a suitable degree of plain education, and instruction in some mechanical art, poor, unprotected male orphan children⁴³.

Bigge explained that a committee, named by Macquarie, was responsible for the management, admission, progress and quarterly expenditure accounts of the institution. This committee was composed of six public officials and two settlers⁴⁴. The committee's report was to be given to the governor after each quarterly meeting⁴⁵. Servants such as the tailor, cook, gardener and washerwoman were convicts. Bigge stated that there were very few orphans, most boys had poor or "abandoned" parents⁴⁶. Bigge was particularly impressed with the Female Orphan School, describing it as "...one from which the greatest benefits may be derived to the community..."⁴⁷. Nevertheless, Bigge admitted

⁴⁰N.S.W. State Archives 4/2223 (microfilm reel no. 600) as cited in *ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴¹Earnshaw, B., "The Convict Apprentices 1820-1838", *Push from the Bush* 5 (December 1979), p. 92.

⁴²*Ibid.*, pp. 93-4.

⁴³Bigge, J. T., *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry on the state of agriculture and trade in the colony of New South Wales* (London, 1823). Facsimile edition (Adelaide, 1966), p. 71.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 72.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, p. 75.

that the children in the Female Orphan School were difficult to control⁴⁸. The ladies of the local committee informed him that the girls' progress and attainments were equal to those of children of their class in England.

Commissioner Bigge emphasised the necessity of separating vulnerable children from their parents so that the influence of parental bad habits might be resisted⁴⁹. Bigge already saw much to praise in the "rising generation". He wrote that this generation were,

...a remarkable exception to the moral and physical character of their parents: they are generally tall in person, and slender in their limbs, of fair complexion, and small features. They are capable of undergoing more fatigue, and are less exhausted by labour than native Europeans; they are active in their habits, but remarkably awkward in their movements. In their tempers they are quick and irascible, but not vindictive; and I only repeat the testimony of persons who have had many opportunities of observing them, that they neither inherit the vices nor the feelings of their parents⁵⁰.

In 1825 T. H. Scott was appointed Archdeacon of the colonies⁵¹. At his appointment the Orphan Schools were given to the Church of England⁵². Scott also became King's visitor of all the schools in the colonies⁵³. He had been Commissioner Bigge's secretary and his appointment came after Earl Bathurst asked him about the state of religion and education in the colonies⁵⁴. During Scott's archdeaconship there were several serious problems with the management of the orphan schools. For instance, Archdeacon Scott reported upon the Master

⁴⁸*Ibid.*

⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 81-2.

⁵¹Ross, J., *The Van Diemen's Land Anniversary and Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1831* (Hobart Town, 1831), p.23.

⁵²Van Krieken, R., *Children and the State social control and the formation of Australian child welfare* (Sydney, 1992), pp. 55-6.

⁵³*A.D.B.*, vol. 2, p.432.

⁵⁴Austin, A. G., *Australian Education 1788-1900 Church, State and Public Education in Colonial Australia* (Melbourne, 1961), pp. 10-11.

and Mistress of the Female Orphan School in 1826 for keeping the children in such a filthy state that most of them were suffering eye infections⁵⁵.

One historian, Kim Humphery, has linked such institutions as the New South Wales Orphan Schools, Female Factory, Benevolent Asylum, Carter's Barracks and Female School of Industry together. He identified the unifying factor as these institutions being designed for "...the reformation and 'rescue' of criminal, orphaned, destitute and neglected children". Furthermore, Humphery recognised that by the mid 1830s a

...system of institutionalization was well established in the colony and this went hand in hand with the development of disciplinary and educational regimes for the confinement of the young, the regulation of their time, the surveillance of their moral behaviour, and the schooling of their minds⁵⁶.

Humphery particularly stressed the link between the orphan schools and the management of juvenile convicts. He recognised a "...similar concern for the careful classification, close observation and constant management of young inmates..."⁵⁷.

In early Van Diemen's Land

The very first Lieutenant Governor of Van Diemen's Land, David Collins, had attempted to create an orphan school in 1806. On the 2 September 1806 Collins wrote a despatch to Viscount Castlereagh at the Colonial Office in which he stated that he had purchased a house to use for "...the education of the Children belonging to the Colony...". Collins intended a Fund to be raised for the childrens' maintenance at a later date. He suggested that the Fund be raised in a similar way to that of the New South Wales Orphan Fund. Furthermore, Collins requested that a married couple might be sent from England to fill the positions of

⁵⁵Report dated 1 May 1826 enclosed in a despatch from Governor Darling to Bathurst, 22 May 1826 in *H.R.A.*, I. xii, p. 313.

⁵⁶Humphery, K., "The remaking of youth: juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia" MA thesis University of Melbourne (1987), p.71.

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, p.100.

Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress, who could be supported by the produce of an attached farm⁵⁸. His plans were not followed through, perhaps because he failed to push ahead and secure the necessary funds⁵⁹. Nevertheless, in 1809 Governor Bligh mentioned "a shell of a building called the orphan school - a shelter alternately for men and cattle"⁶⁰.

Lieutenant Governor Sorell set the groundwork for Arthur in many aspects of administration. He has been most notable in this sense for his administration of the convict system. However, Sorell also deserves to be credited with laying the groundwork for Arthur's management of vulnerable children. In a despatch dated the 10 August 1818, Sorell wrote to Governor Macquarie that he was "very anxious" to arrange for the instruction of the children of convicts and poor free settlers in Hobart Town. Sorell did not consider the existing schools in the vicinity sufficient to accommodate all these children. He wrote of his intention to make a "most particular enquiry" about these children at the next muster and requested information on schools in New South Wales⁶¹. Although Macquarie responded that he would happily agree with "any reasonable Plan" for instructing the children, he also expressed his hope that the existing schools would be sufficient if they were improved. Expense was inevitably a factor⁶². Lieutenant Governor Sorell wrote back to Governor Macquarie on the 18 November 1818 detailing the results of his investigation. Sorell stated that the present institutions were more adequate than he had believed and that he was providing for any children in the area who lacked instruction⁶³.

⁵⁸Lieutenant Governor Collins to Viscount Castlereagh, 2 September 1806 in *H.R.A.*, III. i, p. 378.

⁵⁹Goodin, V. W. E., "Public Education in NSW before 1848", *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, vol. 36 (1950), p. 77.

⁶⁰As cited in Reeves, C., *A History of Tasmanian Education, Vol. I* (Melbourne, 1935), p. 4.

⁶¹Lieutenant Governor Sorell to Governor Macquarie, 10 August 1818 in *H.R.A.*, III. ii, p. 345.

⁶²Governor Macquarie to Lieutenant Governor Sorell, 24 September 1818 in *H.R.A.*, III.ii, p. 354.

⁶³Lieutenant Governor Sorell to Governor Macquarie, 18 November 1818 in *H.R.A.*, III.ii, pp.361-2.

Lieutenant Governor Sorell did not forget about his plans for establishing an institution to care for the children of the lower orders. He raised the issue of establishing an orphan school in a despatch to Under Secretary Wilmot-Horton dated 30 May 1823. Sorell intended such an institution to accommodate children from remote districts as well as orphans. Sorell informed Wilmot of his desire to receive the Governor's sanction to have the institution built upon Government land near Hobart Town and to appropriate colonial revenue towards its support in the same manner as was done in New South Wales. The Chief Chaplain in Van Diemen's Land and superintendent of schools in the southern region of the colony, Reverend Bedford, had suggested a suitable person to run the institution. This person was in England and Sorell asked the Colonial Office to consider whether he was the appropriate person for the situation, and if so, to send him out to the colony⁶⁴.

Commissioner Bigge visited Van Diemen's Land in 1820⁶⁵. In his subsequent report on the state of the colony of New South Wales, Commissioner Bigge noted that the worst convicts were sent to Van Diemen's Land⁶⁶. One would therefore assume that the moral environment of Van Diemen's Land was worse than that of New South Wales. Nevertheless, despite recognising the importance of the Orphan Schools and Carters' Barracks in New South Wales, the Commissioner did not recommend such institutions for Van Diemen's Land. This was also despite Bigge's belief that Van Diemen's Land trailed behind New South Wales in educational attainments. Commissioner Bigge did recommend a central school for a hundred boys and one for a hundred girls for the colony. Bigge also recommended that a farm should be established near the boys' schools with a respectable person having a good knowledge of agriculture. Furthermore,

⁶⁴Lieutenant Governor Sorell to Under Secretary Wilmot, 30 May 1823 in *H.R.A.*, III. iv, p. 75.

⁶⁵Reeves, C., *A History of Tasmanian Education*, Vol. I (Melbourne, 1935), p. 9.

⁶⁶Bigge, J. T., *Report of the Commissioner of Inquiry into the state of the colony of New South Wales* (London, 1822). Facsimile edition (Adelaide, 1966), p. 74.

Commissioner Bigge suggested that the care of the children should be entrusted to a chaplain⁶⁷.

One of the people that Bigge extracted evidence on education from was Mr Kemp. In November 1819, Kemp claimed that no Female Orphan School could be established "...upon any basis of morality or religion or while Lieutenant Governor Sorell is in the colony..."⁶⁸. This evidence illustrates that there was an awareness in the community that a Female Orphan School ought to be established. However, this evidence must be approached cautiously because Kemp was a critic of Sorell and eventually responsible for Sorell's recall. He was referring to Sorell's loose morals in living with another woman's wife and acting as if she were his when he was already married himself⁶⁹.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur attempted to follow through on Sorell's plans for an orphan school. In a despatch dated 28 October 1824, Arthur addressed Bathurst on the issue. Arthur enclosed a copy of a letter that Reverend Bedford had written to him stating that the candidate he had put forward to run the institution had accepted the position if the Government would provide a passage to the colony for himself and his family. As well as forwarding this request, Arthur also mentioned his intention to enlarge the institution to include Bigge's plan⁷⁰. Bathurst replied in a despatch dated the 3 June 1825 that he could not send out the man in question as he did not have his address⁷¹. The matter appears to have ended there.

There is very little evidence about the attitude towards juvenile convicts in pre-Arthurian Van Diemen's Land. There was little recognition of them as separate

⁶⁷Enclosure in Arthur to Under Secretary Horton, 28 July 1823 in *H.R.A.*, III.iv, p. 81.

⁶⁸*H.R.A.*, III.iii, p.221.

⁶⁹Robson, L. L., *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1 (Melbourne, 1983), pp.132-3.

⁷⁰Lieutenant Governor Arthur to Bathurst, 28 October 1824 in *H.R.A.*, III.iv, pp. 224-5.

⁷¹Bathurst to Lieutenant Governor Arthur, 3 June 1825 in *H.R.A.*, III. iv, p. 280.

from adult male convicts. They were treated in the same way, amassed in Hobart Town until they could be assigned to a settler. The person in charge of government works had informed Commissioner Bigge in 1820 that convict boys tended to be assigned to settlers with several good farming men. They were apparently accepted by the settlers as a favour to the government as they were considered "...a bad class of trained thieves". Some boys were taught trades like stone-cutting and brick-making, however, the informant did not expect this to be successful as he had often received complaints about their idleness and misconduct.⁷² Reverend Knopwood recorded that there was a great deal of public sympathy for two boys that were sentenced to be executed in May 1815. Thomas Smith, aged 16, and George Kirby, aged 17, received last-minute reprieves. Knopwood had presented Lieutenant Governor Davey, Sorell's predecessor, with a petition from the inhabitants of Hobart Town to save the boys and was thanked by "everybody" for his attention to the boys⁷³. Lieutenant Governor Sorell had recognised that it was very difficult to assign young male convicts. He acknowledged the arrival of the *Countess of Harcourt* with 172 male convicts in a despatch to Under Secretary Goulburn dated 8 August 1821. Sorell observed that most of these convicts were young males from London and Middlesex who lacked work skills. This meant that these convicts "...have offered a less favorable occasion than I have yet observed for the Settlers to supply themselves with Servants"⁷⁴.

There were no separate provisions for female juvenile convicts until after Arthur's period. Historians have attributed this to notions of the economic unimportance of female labour and assumptions of the female convicts being morally irreclaimable⁷⁵. Another reason given for this situation in New South Wales is

⁷²*H.R.A.*, III.iii, p. 237.

⁷³*The Diary of the Reverend Robert Knopwood 1803-1838*, edited by M. Nicholls (Launceston, 1977), p. 205.

⁷⁴Sorell to Goulburn, 8 August 1821 in *H.R.A.*, III, iv, p. 26.

⁷⁵Alford, K., *Production or reproduction. An economic history of women in Australia 1788-1850* (Melbourne, 1984) as cited by Humphery, K., "The remaking of youth: juvenile convicts

that the small number of girl convicts transported simply did not attract the government's attention⁷⁶, no doubt this reason applied to Van Diemen's Land also.

The nature of society in the colonies of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land led to the governments in these places taking an earlier role in the welfare of its people than in Britain. Firstly, as the two colonies were penal colonies, the government had a clear responsibility to care for prisoners. Secondly, the identity of the colonies was not merely penal. There was a growing number of free emigrants and native-born. There were hopes that if the present generation could not be reformed, the "rising generation" would prove to be good, upright citizens who would advance the colonies' prosperity and status. Thirdly, the problem of destitute orphans would probably have been more obvious in the colonies than Britain. This was due to it being likely that there was a higher proportion of destitute orphans in the colonies because colonists would have fewer family and friends than in Britain. Likewise, there would have been a higher proportion of illegitimate children. Another possible factor may have been that the governments of the colonies was more accessible to the community and therefore closer to its concerns. Individually, many governors were very humane. The historian M. Belcher has argued that the unique colonial situation gave children a higher status in New South Wales (and this could surely be extended to encompass Van Diemen's Land as well) than in England⁷⁷. It was not until 1833 that the British government made its first grant to English schools⁷⁸.

and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis University of Melbourne (1987), p.102 & Sturma, M., "Eye of the beholder: the stereotype of women convicts 1788-1852", *Labour History*, no.34 (May 1978) as cited by Humphery, p. 103. See also Humphery, pp. 9-11.

⁷⁶Humphery, K., "The remaking of youth: juvenile convicts and orphan immigrants in colonial Australia", MA thesis University of Melbourne (1987), p.100.

⁷⁷Belcher, M., "Children and the law in early New South Wales", *The Push from the Bush*, no. 18 (October 1984), p. 3.

⁷⁸Cleverley, J. F., *The first generation. School and society in early Australia* (Sydney, 1971), p. 5.

CHAPTER TWO: LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR ARTHUR

Lieutenant Governor George Arthur governed Van Diemen's Land from May 14 1824 until 1836⁷⁹. In 1825 Van Diemen's Land had become independent from New South Wales⁸⁰. As the executive authority in Van Diemen's Land when the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer were founded, Arthur was credited with founding the two institutions. This is an honour Lieutenant Governor Arthur deserved, but his involvement in the two institutions went even further than this. The Colonial Office placed the schools under the Lieutenant Governor's control⁸¹. Arthur appointed a Committee of Management to oversee the King's Orphan Schools and insisted upon regularly reading the Minutes Book of this Committee. The Minutes Book is strewn with marginal notes from Arthur. Although Arthur delegated superintendence of Point Puer to the Commandant of Port Arthur, he maintained an interest in the establishment and gave instructions to the Commandant from time to time.

Arthur's benevolence may have owed something to his religious outlook. He was a very devout Evangelical within the Church of England⁸². Arthur's religion has also been defined as Calvinist Evangelicalism⁸³. Arthur believed that the "heart of every man" was "desperately wicked" and felt "absolute abhorrence" when contemplating his own "sad mis-spent life". He wrote to his sister that he placed "...no reliance on good works, for Faith is the Rock; the good works which follow from it will not save my soul, but I hope may be useful to my fellow countrymen". Arthur also acted upon his belief that,

⁷⁹*H.R.A.*, III. iv, pp. 563-4 & *A.D.B.*, vol. 1, p.3& p.37.

⁸⁰*H.R.A.*, III. iv, p.304 & p.870.

⁸¹Murray to Arthur, 16 February 1829, p128, C.O. 408/5, P.R.O. reel 289.

⁸²Robson, L. L., *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1 (Melbourne, 1983), p.138.

⁸³*A.D.B.*, vol. 1, p. 33.

there is nothing so expedient as to have always in view the nearness of Eternity. It deadens our interest in this transitory scene, without at all disqualifying us from that part which God has assigned us to act in it⁸⁴.

The provisions he made for education in his previous appointment as superintendent of Honduras were certainly related to his religious outlook⁸⁵. To Arthur religious instruction was a vital element of education.

The environment in which the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer were founded was one which also gave rise to many public and private benevolent societies⁸⁶. For instance, a Mechanics Institute was established in 1827 with Arthur as patron⁸⁷. Its purpose was the education of industrious and respectable members of the working classes⁸⁸. The population of the colony increased from around 15000 people in 1824 to 45000 people in 1836. This rapid increase during Arthur's lieutenant-governorship would have increased demands for such services⁸⁹.

Another factor which may have influenced Arthur's provisions for vulnerable children is his own large family. Unlike his predecessors, Arthur had a conventional family and cared intensely for his childrens' moral well-being. He proudly described his children in a letter to his friend General Don in October 1827. Arthur wrote,

'Frederick,' the Eldest, is a noble Fellow full of intelligence - but much more partial to his Horse than to his Book: 'Maria', the second, her fond mother would not be ashamed to acknowledge: she is a very fine Girl, but

⁸⁴ Arthur to his sister Betsey, 13 March 1818, 8 March and 8 November 1819, Arthur Papers, Royal Commonwealth Society, London, Letter Book 7, as cited in Shaw, A.G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart, 1784-1854* (Melbourne, 1980), pp. 23-4.

⁸⁵ Shaw, A.G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854* (Melbourne, 1980), pp. 22-5 & p. 28.

⁸⁶ Almanacks by Bent, Melville and Ross 1828-1834; public institutions-Melville, H., *Van Diemen's Land Annual for the year 1834*, pp.65-6.

⁸⁷ Bent, A., *The Tasmanian Almanack for the year of our lord 1828*, p.104.

⁸⁸ Phillips, D., *Making more adequate provision state education in Tasmania, 1839-1985* (Tasmania, 1985), p.12.

⁸⁹ Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.9.

rather too independent. 'Kate' the third has the most lovely figure you can imagine, with a very pretty expression of countenance. 'Eliza' the fourth is a very lovely Child possessing the sweetest temper I ever met with - it is impossible to ruffle it. 'Charles', the fifth, is a very tender plant improbably delicate, but, as it frequently happens, by far the most noisy and boisterous of the whole Tribe.- Edward, the sixth, is as robust as his Brother is delicate & altogether is a different man - quiet, sedate, & tractable in every way.- Fanny the youngest, / & so I trust she will remain/ is the greatest beauty in the Eastern Hemisphere, & I should like to exhibit her to Lady Don, for whose perusal, more especially, I have entered into this description of my progeny⁹⁰.

At the time Arthur wrote this letter his children were aged between 14 months and 11 years. Fanny did not remain the youngest child. There were four more additions to the family; namely, Sigismund in August 1828, John Raynor in November 1830, Leonard in July 1832 and Georgina who was baptised January 1835⁹¹. There was also a son called George who had died in 1823⁹². Arthur experienced problems with his sons' behaviour. For example, Edward's "want of strict veracity" was blamed upon a bad tutor he had in Van Diemen's Land, and gossip linked Frederick to an actress⁹³. However, these were minor offences in comparison to Sigismund's. In November 1843 Sigismund was almost expelled from school because he pulled a knife on the master when he was about to be punished for idleness. His father was very angry because Sigismund had been brought up well, and therefore had no excuse for such an action⁹⁴. Although all these problems occurred after the foundation of Point Puer, they serve to illustrate Arthur's attitude toward juvenile transgressions.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur was a very efficient ruler, who was devoted to this duty to such an extent that he attempted to control all aspects of the

⁹⁰Arthur to General Don, 29 October 1827, *Papers of Sir G. Arthur*, vol. 5 M.L. A2165 Arthur's letters 1822-50.

⁹¹Shaw, A. G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854* (Melbourne 1980), p.122.

⁹²Levy, M. C. I., *Governor George Arthur a colonial benevolent despot* (Melbourne, 1953), p.12.

⁹³Shaw, A. G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854* (Melbourne, 1980), pp. 212-13.

⁹⁴Shaw, A. G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854* (Melbourne, 1980), p. 276.

administration of the colony. He informed the Colonial Office that he was in his office,

...generally two hours in the summer, and one hour in the winter before my breakfast hour, (which is eight o'clock) every morning, and am seldom occupied less than ten, most generally, twelve hours every day, and constantly until a late hour at night..⁹⁵.

Arthur was not exaggerating when he wrote that,

Almost without exception the outline of every public document, or letter is, either by a brief memorandum, or more extended minute, prepared by myself, and my notes in the margin of the most commonplace letters furnish the answers..⁹⁶.

Arthur justly concluded that of the civil and military government,

...I may confidently say, that there is not one single branch over which I do not, to the best of my ability, apply the most constant daily vigilance⁹⁷.

Arthur's first priority was the penal governance of Van Diemen's Land. He stated that,

This colony must be considered in the light of an extensive Gaol to the Empire-the punishment of Crimes and reformation of Criminals the grand objects, in its Penal character, to be attended to..⁹⁸.

However, he still had hopes for a prosperous free colony sometime in the future. He recognised that while the colony was being regulated as a penal settlement, Britain "...was contemporaneously laying the foundation of a free Colony" and that

...when the rugged scaffolding and rubbish is removed a magnificent...building delights the eye...so here when transportation ceases, a flourishing country will at once [be] exhibited⁹⁹.

⁹⁵Arthur to Murray, 6 November 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III.vii, p.645.

⁹⁶*Ibid.*

⁹⁷*Ibid.*, p.646.

⁹⁸Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 in *H.R.A.*, III.v, p.152.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, p.153.

So Arthur was simultaneously working on improving both the penal governance of Van Diemen's Land and the foundation of a free colony.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KING'S ORPHAN SCHOOLS

For several years before the King's Orphan Schools were founded there had been public pressure to establish such an institution. Contemporary newspapers implored Lieutenant Governor Arthur to set up an orphan school. Perhaps the earliest such newspaper article appeared in the *Colonial Times* on January 6 1826. This editorial compared the state of Van Diemen's Land to that of New South Wales, and found that one advantage which New South Wales possessed over Van Diemen's Land was,

...perhaps the greatest, and the most necessary in reference merely to humanity, which can be experienced in a new Country,...the establishment of an Orphan School! Lamentable indeed is it to witness the scenes of distress which are experienced for the want of this most necessary Asylum! How many poor children are there in this Island, naked and hungry, who are crying objects of such a charity! and this too, while we have witnessed so much said, and so many flourishes about Bible Societies; so much disgusting cant and hypocrisy. Religion is said to be in fashion; and yet the poor orphan children of the Colony are suffered to exist as they can, and to grow up in ignorance even of the first rudiments, not of religion, but almost of the very existence of the Deity!¹⁰⁰

The article went on to announce that the claims of the orphans ought to be demanded as they were a "matter of right". The author of this article was also under the impression that the funds which ought to have been spent on establishing an orphan school were appropriated to government salaries¹⁰¹. As a newspaper article, the rhetorical language was likely to have exaggerated the need for an orphan school. The editor of the *Colonial Times*, Andrew Bent, took pride in the persistent message of his paper to establish an orphan school¹⁰². Bent may have been antagonistic to Arthur, as Arthur had prosecuted him in 1826-7 for libel¹⁰³.

¹⁰⁰*Colonial Times*, 6 January 1826, vol. 11, no. 505.

¹⁰¹*Ibid.*

¹⁰²*Colonial Times*, 24 February 1826, vol. 11, no. 512.

¹⁰³*A.D.B.*, vol. 1, p.37.

On February 24 1826, the paper enumerated the type of children who needed to be cared for in an orphan school. These included “poor distressed orphans” of convict and free parentage. The paper exhibited the instance of a free woman with four children she could not support. Her husband had been convicted to be sent to Norfolk Island, and the family was threatened with losing their home because, by the man’s conviction, his property was forfeited to the crown. The author lashed out at some “religious hypocrites” he had heard who “...justify these sorts of acts, upon the pretence of the divine authority of ‘visiting the sins of the father upon the children!’”.¹⁰⁴ The fact that the editor felt confident enough to mock the notion of “visiting the sins of the father upon the children” illustrates that there was a widespread acceptance that children should not be punished because of their parents’ sins. Children of convicts were not automatically castigated as convicts themselves.

Archdeacon Scott made his first visitation of the colony in 1826. He touched upon the effect of education in eradicating juvenile crime in his address to the clergy on 2 March 1826. Most of the colony’s officials were also present. The Archdeacon provided statistics on the decline in the crime rate that accompanied the education of “working class” children in Britain. He claimed that there were 497 juvenile delinquents among the 1,300,000 inhabitants of London. Only 14 of these delinquents had attended National Schools, with 8 of these remaining at school for just one week. The triumphant conclusion reached was that, “...not one child, educated at a National School, has ever appeared in England at the bar of justice!”¹⁰⁵. No matter how doubtful these conclusions are, they certainly illustrate that Archdeacon Scott was concerned to emphasise to the providers of education the importance of educating the working classes to reduce crime. Again, there was a recognition that working class children were likely to become

¹⁰⁴*Colonial Times*, 24 February 1826, vol. 11, no. 512.

¹⁰⁵*Colonial Times*, 3 March 1826, vol. 11, no. 513.

juvenile criminals if their education was neglected. Juvenile criminals were children of the same background as the orphans whose education had been neglected.

In March 1826 the *Colonial Times* drew the public's attention to a land grant which Lieutenant Governor Arthur had provided for two orphan children. The editor believed this to be the first such provision for orphans and took the opportunity to again press upon the public's attention the need for an orphan school. Furthermore, the editor expressed his hope that the Archdeacon had not left Van Diemen's Land without arranging for the establishment of an orphan school¹⁰⁶.

Archdeacon Scott had not neglected to press upon the authorities the necessity of establishing an orphan school as soon as possible. Lieutenant Governor Arthur transmitted the Archdeacon's two reports to the Colonial Office in a despatch dated 21 April 1826. In a report from the Archdeacon to Arthur, dated 13 February 1826, the Archdeacon commented upon census statistics taken in November 1825. These statistics showed that there were a total of 2444 children in Van Diemen's Land, of which 1276 were males and 1168 were females under the age of fifteen years. 1355 of these children had free parents, 695 had emancipated parents and 394 had convict parents¹⁰⁷. Archdeacon Scott then attempted to calculate how many of these children were being educated, and concluded that of all the infants aged four years, only about 20 in 100 would receive any education. Therefore he concluded that there was "...a manifest necessity of some immediate step being taken". The Archdeacon believed that vice and immorality had widely affected the "rising generation", as many native-born youths had been "...brought to an untimely end, by the hands of Justice..."

¹⁰⁶*Colonial Times*, 17 March 1826, vol. 11, no. 515.

¹⁰⁷Enclosure 1: Archdeacon Scott to Lieutenant Governor Arthur, 13 February 1826 in Lieutenant Governor Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 from *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 154.

and many girls were destroyed by seduction and prostitution. Two of the causes which the Archdeacon gave for this state of affairs were “the dissolute habits of the Parents, and the want of attention on the part of the Government...”. There was also the matter of many free people setting a “baneful example” by being unashamed of living in adultery, and the people who were a party to this by association¹⁰⁸. Archdeacon Scott also displayed his awareness that English legislation was not suitable for the colony¹⁰⁹. The Archdeacon believed “ignorance and vice” to be so rooted that only “...a long time, incessant watchfulness, and perseverance...” could turn the situation around. Moreover, he felt that the moral standards of the society could only be lifted with the next generation¹¹⁰. Lieutenant Governor Arthur agreed with Archdeacon Scott upon the causes of vice, but confessed he did not consider the consequences to be so very bad¹¹¹.

One of the proposals put forward by the Archdeacon to improve the moral standards of Van Demonians was the establishment of Male and Female Orphan Schools¹¹². He intended such schools to support and instruct the children of convicts¹¹³. Archdeacon Scott’s recommendations for these schools included that they should not be located near a large town and that both schools should have a married clergyman to superintend them, with a Matron and Assistants in proportion to the number of children¹¹⁴. He further recommended a Superintendent of Agriculture to instruct the boys at the Male Orphan School and believed that the Orphan Schools could combine infant, primary and secondary teaching. He recommended that the secondary teaching,

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 155.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*, p. 157.

¹¹⁰*Ibid.*, p. 155.

¹¹¹Lieutenant Governor Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 in *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 150.

¹¹²Enclosure 1: Archdeacon Scott to Lieutenant Governor Arthur, 13 February 1826, in Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 from *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 157 & p. 158.

¹¹³*Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 158-9.

...should be devoted to the common pursuits of Life, such as mechanical, domestic, horticultural and agricultural, with a given proportion of the day to be devoted to a continuance of Scholastic exercises. The Female School should be devoted partly to Work, education, and a weekly rotation, after a certain course of education, in domestic duties¹¹⁵.

The Archdeacon recorded that wholly destitute children ought to be admitted first, then those who "...may be saved from ruin, especially girls...", followed by those from large families¹¹⁶. In case expenditure was an issue, Archdeacon Scott pointed out that education would reduce the crime rate¹¹⁷. In his second report, Archdeacon Scott recommended that the schools should be located at Ross, as this was the most central location in Van Diemen's Land¹¹⁸.

Arthur may have had more influence over Archdeacon Scott's recommendations than has been realised. The Archdeacon wrote a letter to Arthur on the subject in December 1825 in which it was clear that Arthur had asked him for advice on the establishment of an orphan school. Archdeacon Scott advised him that the object of education as "...a refuge from vice and profligacy of children would justify any appropriation of the King's Revenue until the Colony could repay the advance". Furthermore, the Archdeacon suggested that Arthur could gain data to calculate the best size and location for the orphan school. This data was a return from clergy and/or magistrates of the number of children in each district of the colony who were genuinely destitute, living in danger of vice and distressed, perhaps because they were part of a large family¹¹⁹. Lieutenant Governor Arthur did follow Archdeacon Scott's advice on gathering data¹²⁰.

¹¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹¹⁶*Ibid.*

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 164.

¹¹⁸Enclosure 4: Archdeacon Scott to Lieutenant Governor Arthur, 7 March 1826, in Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 from *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 176.

¹¹⁹Scott to Arthur, 14 December 1825, in the *Papers of Sir G. Arthur*, vol. 13, M.L. A2173: Letters from Scott 1824-38.

¹²⁰C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T.

Another significant participant in the establishment of the orphan schools was Reverend William Bedford. When Reverend Bedford submitted his observations on the state of religion and education requested by Arthur soon after his arrival in the colony, he pressed the necessity of establishing an orphan school¹²¹.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur agreed with the Archdeacon's statement on Schools, describing the Orphan Schools as of "paramount importance" and stating that his attention would be directed to them until he received Bathurst's commands¹²². This was when Arthur noted that as the colony was primarily penal, his first attention was directed to punishing and reforming criminals¹²³. He acknowledged that education and religion played a necessary role in this. Arthur also anticipated that a decrease in crime would be partly effected by these means¹²⁴.

Bathurst replied to Arthur's despatch in a despatch of his own dated 22 December 1826¹²⁵. Bathurst stated that he agreed with the "general propriety" of Archdeacon Scott's recommendations, but they appeared to be too extensive and to

...comprize too many different objects to render it possible for me to convey to you specific Instructions, until I shall have received fuller information, than I at present possess, in regard to the real value of the Church Lands¹²⁶.

In other words, the British Government was not willing to spend a great deal on extending education and religion in the colony. However, Bathurst did approve of the Orphan Schools. He regarded them as essential as an "Object of Charity" as well as for the,

¹²¹Bedford to Arthur, 25 May 1824, in the *Papers of Sir G. Arthur*, vol. 39, M.L A2199: Reverend W. Bedford 1824-36.

¹²²Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 in *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 150.

¹²³*supra*, p. 28.

¹²⁴Arthur to Bathurst, 21 April 1826 in *H.R.A.*, III.v, pp. 152-3.

¹²⁵Bathurst to Arthur, 22 December 1826 in *H.R.A.*, III.v, p. 469.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 470.

...general interest of the Community by bringing up to Industrious habits a Class of unfortunate Beings, who would otherwise be left without other means of support than what they might obtain by Acts of Violence and dishonesty¹²⁷.

The *Colonial Times* had somehow discovered that there were arrangements in place to establish an orphan school in December 1826 and could not help expressing its pleasure¹²⁸. Within a month, the paper found it necessary to again impress upon all the need that existed for an orphan school. In sentimental terms, the paper read,

Surely, our young Tasmanians are worth cherishing in their early days, when in helpless infancy they are bereaved of their parents.- The number of poor destitute orphans is really deplorable, we may add unexampled...¹²⁹.

Again, the paper provided examples of the type of children that needed to be cared for. These included the "poor little innocents" who had arrived by the ship *Sir Charles Forbes* which their mothers had died aboard. These children were "...thrown on a strange land, without a friend and without an asylum to receive them, except the Colonial Hospital"¹³⁰. There were also the four Davis children whose father had been executed for stealing sheep and whose mother had died in the Female Factory the week before. The paper recommended that such an asylum ought to be funded by Auction Duties (in a similar way to Sydney). The paper had believed that an orphan school would be funded by selling the government farm and herd at Ross, but this did not prove to be true. It exclaimed,

Oh! fie upon those hard hearts which can bear to witness, and to hear the miserable cries of the numerous orphans, and not endeavour to provide them with an asylum, in the shape of an Orphan School¹³¹.

¹²⁷*Ibid.*, p. 471.

¹²⁸*Colonial Times*, 15 December 1826, vol. 11, no. 554.

¹²⁹*Colonial Times*, 12 January 1827, vol. 12, no. 558.

¹³⁰*Ibid.*

¹³¹*Ibid.*

Furthermore, the paper drew attention to the type of establishments that were being built. These were government and parsonage houses, as well as government farms, which were described as "...nonsensical, ridiculous, useless - nay, injurious establishments..."¹³². Another piece of practical advice the *Colonial Times* provided was that a Ladies' Committee could examine the state of female prisoners and orphans. It named Lieutenant Governor Arthur and Reverend Bedford as the men responsible for the condition of orphans when it stated that it was certain that these two men would not object to such a committee. The article ended by addressing the benefits Lieutenant Governor Arthur would receive for establishing an orphan school, namely he would,

...not only gain the present commendations and good wishes of every feeling heart, but he will ensure to himself the blessings of thousands in ages yet to come¹³³.

It seems likely that the delay in establishing the orphan school was caused by Arthur's fear that the expense would be too high for the colony to defray¹³⁴. Arthur also awaited the Colonial Office's reply¹³⁵.

In August 1827 the *Colonial Times* reported that dispatches from Bathurst had arrived which instructed the Lieutenant Governor to go ahead with his plans for establishing an orphan school. It had heard that the school was to be located in New Norfolk. The author thought that the land Lieutenant Governor Sorell had bought at New Town for this purpose was better as it was closer to Hobart Town. The paper also reported that the children were to be educated by the Lancastrian system (a monitorial system) and that the management of the institution would resemble that of the Surrey Philanthropic Society where boys were taught trades and the girls were taught domestic economy¹³⁶.

¹³²*Ibid.*

¹³³*Ibid.*

¹³⁴Executive Council Minutes, 22 June 1827, EC 4/1, A.O.T., pp. 180-1.

¹³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 181.

¹³⁶*Colonial Times*, 24 August 1827, vol. 12, no. 590.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur had suggested to the Executive Council on 22 June 1827 that the orphan school be located at New Norfolk as there was sufficient land available and it was close enough to Hobart Town

...to be constantly subject to the control and inspection of the Committee to be appointed for its superintendence, and at the same time sufficiently removed from a populous town...¹³⁷.

Perhaps another reason was the interest shown in such an institution by the chaplain of New Norfolk, Reverend Robinson. Reverend Robinson had addressed a letter to Arthur on this subject in December 1825¹³⁸. Having heard that Arthur intended to establish an orphan school, Robinson offered his observations based on what he had seen of similar institutions. Assuming the aim of the institution to be to provide protection and instruction to orphans or children with parents unable or unfit to provide these, Robinson stated that the efficiency of the institution would be dependent upon admitting young children¹³⁹. He advised that the children should be instructed in "useful knowledge" such as writing. He also suggested that the children should be trained as servants and taught trades. In that way, the children could be assigned as servants or mechanics¹⁴⁰. Reverend Robinson believed that this was the best course of instruction as,

the knowledge merely of Reading and Writing is very deficient, & often injurious, without habits of Industry, & the ability of applying those habits with most benefit both to the Individual & the Community¹⁴¹.

Turning his attention to finances, Reverend Robinson suggested that most of the expense incurred by the institution could be defrayed by the work of that institution. With land attached to the institution, the boys could be employed in cultivation. Robinson also raised the issue of the children in the Female Factory¹⁴². Considering the moral contamination they were exposed to, he

¹³⁷Executive Council Minutes, 22 June 1827 in EC 4/1, A.O.T., pp. 178-80.

¹³⁸Robinson to Arthur, December 15 1825 in C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp. 2-8.

¹³⁹*Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 4.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*

warned that, "...we must expect that vice will grow with their growth & strengthen with their strength..."¹⁴³. Most of Robinson's suggestions were implemented.

¹⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 5.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE FUNCTIONING OF THE KING'S ORPHAN SCHOOLS

Lieutenant Governor Arthur rented a house for the Male Orphan School in New Town in October 1827. In February 1828 he rented Belle Vue in Hobart for the Female Orphan School.¹⁴⁴

At a meeting of the Executive Council in June 1827, Arthur had acknowledged his fear that the colony would not be able to bear the costs of an orphan school with a hundred children under the charge of a married clergyman. As an alternative, he had suggested a respectable married man with experience in educating children be appointed in charge of a smaller group of children. Arthur suggested that Mr and Mrs Giblin, who had recently arrived from England carrying Bathurst's recommendation, might be suitable. The Executive Council agreed with his suggestions¹⁴⁵. Mr and Mrs Giblin became Master and Matron of the Male Orphan School. A Mr and Mrs Chorley, recommended by the Ecclesiastical Board, were appointed as Master and Matron of the Female Orphan School¹⁴⁶.

Archdeacon Scott made many arrangements for the Orphan Schools during his second visitation of the colony at the beginning of 1828. He analysed the returns of vulnerable children which Arthur had gathered from magistrates and clergy, and reported that there were 91 boys and 123 girls under 12 years who were suitable subjects for the orphan school. However, he doubted whether all the

¹⁴⁴Lorraine, K., "Perceptions of disadvantage: an analysis of government and public attitudes toward the care of orphan and destitute children 1828-1879", BEd thesis University of Tasmania (1983), p.5.

¹⁴⁵Executive Council Minutes, 22 June 1827 in EC 4/1, A.O.T., pp. 180-2.

¹⁴⁶Arthur to Murray, 10 December 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III.vii, p. 674.

parents and guardians would willingly hand over these children¹⁴⁷. Arthur commented on this to Huskisson at the Colonial Office in a despatch dated 14 April 1828¹⁴⁸. Arthur suggested that he, as chief administrator in the colony, should assume overall responsibility for Churches and Schools until a Church and School Corporation was appointed¹⁴⁹. As it would be impossible for him to pay detailed attention to the Orphan Schools, he informed his superior that a Committee of Public Officers would be appointed to manage the Male Orphan School and a Committee of Ladies would manage the Female Orphan School¹⁵⁰. The Archdeacon would form regulations to govern these and expenditure was to be regulated by the Committees. He planned for the accounts to be regularly sent to the Colonial Auditor for examination every quarter, and then passed on to the Colonial Secretary for the Government's sanction¹⁵¹. Arthur retained overall control of the schools as the Colonial Office placed the schools under the Lieutenant Governor's control in 1829¹⁵².

In March 1828 Lieutenant Governor Arthur ordered a notice to be placed in the *Government Gazette* announcing that the "King's Schools" were open. This stipulated the "classifications" of children which might be admitted. These were those,

1. entirely destitute
2. having one parent living
3. having both parents living, but the parents being completely "incompetent" to afford them education
4. having parents who could contribute £12 per annum¹⁵³.

¹⁴⁷Enclosure 2: Scott to Arthur, 4 February 1828 in Arthur to Huskisson, 14 April 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III.vii, p. 151.

¹⁴⁸Arthur to Huskisson, 14 April 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III.vii, pp. 124-132.

¹⁴⁹*Ibid.*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 128-9.

¹⁵¹*Ibid.*, p. 129.

¹⁵²Murray to Arthur, 16 February 1829, p.128, C.O. 408/5, P.R.O. reel 289.

¹⁵³Arthur to Colonial Secretary Burnett, minute no. 68 in C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp. 81-2.

The notice appeared on 29 March¹⁵⁴. Applications for the admission of children of the first three categories were to be made by a printed form to be addressed to the Colonial Secretary. Arthur ordered 300 copies of this form to be printed and some distributed to clergy and police magistrates. Applications for admission of children belonging to the fourth category were to be made by letter addressed to the Colonial Secretary¹⁵⁵.

The application forms were to include, as well as the petitioner and child's names and the reason for the application, an original copy of the child's birth or baptism certificate, the parents' situation, the number and age of any siblings and a "certificate and recommendation" signed by the clergyman and police magistrate of the district. In signing the application form, the parent or guardian handed over the guardianship of the child to the Lieutenant Governor. They agreed that the child would stay at the Orphan School as long as the Lieutenant Governor thought appropriate and that at a "proper age" the child would be "...disposed of at His Excellency's discretion, as an Apprentice or Servant"¹⁵⁶.

The Committee of Management for the King's Orphan Schools were officially recognised in a government notice issued from the Colonial Secretary's Office on 24 April 1828. The committee was initially composed of Archdeacon Scott, Major Kirkwood (the senior military officer in the colony), Joseph Hone (Master of the Supreme Court), Affleck Moodie (Assistant Commissary General) and Reverend William Bedford¹⁵⁷. The committee first met on 26 April to consider Arthur's suggestions on managing the schools. These suggestions included that the committee recommend rules for the management of the schools as well as

¹⁵⁴*Government Gazette*, March 29 1828, vol. 13, no. 620.

¹⁵⁵Arthur to Colonial Secretary Burnett, minute no. 68 in C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., p. 82.

¹⁵⁶Anne Drabble's application form on behalf of her sons, June 1828 in C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp. 144-6.

¹⁵⁷*Minute Book of the Committee of Management of the King's Orphan School*, S.W.D. 24, A.O.T., p. 14; official positions- Bent, A., *The Tasmanian Almanack for the year of our Lord 1828*, p.90, p.92 & p.106.

rations and clothing, and that the committee should meet weekly to assess applications, inspect accounts and alternately visit the schools¹⁵⁸. The regulations of the New South Wales Orphan Schools were adapted to suit¹⁵⁹. The committee decided that Reverend Bedford would visit the schools twice a week and the committee initially met at 10 o'clock every Saturday morning in the vestry of St David's Church¹⁶⁰. Archdeacon Scott chaired the first 2 months of committee meetings, then Joseph Hone, then Boyes as secretary¹⁶¹, followed in this position by Yeoland¹⁶² and Everett¹⁶³. Other additions to the Committee of Management were Reverend Norman in 1829¹⁶⁴, Archdeacon Broughton in March 1833¹⁶⁵, Reverend Palmer as Rural Dean in October 1833¹⁶⁶, Chief Justice Pedder, Captain Montagu and Captain Swanson in October 1833¹⁶⁷. A doctor was appointed to attend the Orphan Schools at least three times a week and to give medical examinations of children before they were admitted¹⁶⁸.

The original requisitions for the two Orphan Schools show that provision was made for up to sixty children at each school¹⁶⁹. The children admitted to the Orphan Schools were generally aged between three and fifteen years¹⁷⁰.

¹⁵⁸*Minute Book of the Committee of Management of the King's Orphan Schools*, S.W.D. 24, A.O.T., 26 April 1828, pp.15-17. Minutes Book hereafter known as *K.O.S. mins.*

¹⁵⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 26 April 1828, p. 17.

¹⁶⁰*Ibid*, pp. 20-1.

¹⁶¹Boyes, the Colonial Auditor, was appointed secretary in June 1830 as Arthur regarded the minutes had been kept unsatisfactorily, Boyes was to forward the minutes book to Arthur after each meeting and check the accounts, 2 June 1830, minute no. 57, C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp. 269-70.

¹⁶²Acting auditor and acting secretary during Boyes absence on leave in 1833. Melville, H., *Van Diemen's Land Annual for the year 1833*, p.222 & Ross, J., *Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1833*, p.8.

¹⁶³Minutes tended to be signed by Scott as chairman until 29 May 1828, then Hone as chairman from 5 June 1828-mid 1830, then Boyes as secretary until 30 March 1832, then Yeoland as secretary until October 1833 when Everett took over as secretary. *K.O.S. mins.*

¹⁶⁴Arthur's memorandum, 17 October 1829, C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., p.235.

¹⁶⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 7 March 1833, p.424.

¹⁶⁶*K.O.S. mins.*, 16 October 1833, p. 461.

¹⁶⁷Minutes of the Committee of Management of the King's Orphan Schools, 31 October 1833, C.S.O. 1/522/11340, A.O.T., p. 150.

¹⁶⁸Scott to Burnett, 10 May 1828, pp. 108-9 & Arthur to Burnett, 12 May 1828, p. 112, C.S.O. 1/122/3073., A.O.T.

¹⁶⁹24 January 1828 C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp. 56-9.

¹⁷⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, *passim*.

Occasionally younger children would be admitted¹⁷¹. However, in 1833 the Committee was concerned about such admittances, regarding such young children to need attention more readily supplied at the Female Factory¹⁷². Many of the children came directly from the Female Factory at the age of three. By admitting such children Arthur improved the efficiency of the convict system. His reasoning was that,

...independent of the children, being in the strict sense of the word, Orphans - there is a very numerous class in the Colony belonging to Female Convicts, who have been permitted by His Majesty's Government to bring out their Children, and Settlers, not willing to be encumbered with their progeny, refuse to take the Parents, and thus both become a burden upon the Colonial Government - Again, the care of the offspring of the illicit amours of these Women in the Colony by Men, who, being themselves Convicts, are incapable of supporting them, equally creates a difficulty in the assignment of such Females¹⁷³.

Children of convicts were also admitted to the King's Orphan Schools from convict ships¹⁷⁴. An example of another type of child admitted to the Orphan Schools is Henry Thrupp, aged nine. He was admitted to the fourth class as there was no school in the district in which he resided¹⁷⁵. Aboriginal children were also admitted¹⁷⁶. Arthur approved of the admittance of children whose parents belonged to the Royal NSW Veteran Company, to the fourth class for half price, or if destitute to be admitted on the foundation¹⁷⁷. There are also cases of children admitted to learn the value of an oath because their evidence was required in court¹⁷⁸.

¹⁷¹For instance: Sarah Smith aged 11 months, Minute 3 May 1828, p. 23 & three 2 year olds from a convict ship, *K.O.S. mins.*, 24 January 1829, p. 123.

¹⁷²*K.O.S. mins.*, 17 January 1833, pp. 415-16.

¹⁷³Arthur to Huskisson, 26 September 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III.vii, p. 499.

¹⁷⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 24 January 1829, p. 123.

¹⁷⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 14 November 1829, p. 182.

¹⁷⁶For eg, *K.O.S. mins.*, 5 December 1829, p. 186.

¹⁷⁷C.S.O. letter 3 June 1830 mentioned in *K.O.S. mins.*, 26 June 1830, p. 228.

¹⁷⁸For eg, Thomas Dalton's evidence was required in a murder case, *K.O.S. mins.*, 16 May 1831, pp. 320-1.

In December 1828 the Committee of Management reported that the Orphan Schools were not fulfilling their purpose because they were so overcrowded. The distance between the two schools also posed a problem as it made it difficult for them to be properly visited. As it seemed imprudent to make additions to the rented properties, the committee recommended that the government erect buildings to house the orphans as soon as possible. The committee suggested that these buildings be situated in a place where the children would be able to attend divine service regularly. They also recommended that there should be an effective barrier between children of the two establishments¹⁷⁹.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur brought these recommendations before the Executive Council on 17 December 1828. The Council advised Arthur to accept the Engineer's plans and have the buildings constructed on government land at New Town¹⁸⁰. Although the building plans were approved in early 1829 and work started in 1830, they were not finished until late 1833¹⁸¹. Each school was made to accommodate 150 children¹⁸². The Female Orphan School took up its new accommodation on 4 October 1833¹⁸³, but it took a few weeks longer for the Male Orphan School to be shifted¹⁸⁴. St John's Church, built on the site for the orphans and New Town inhabitants, was consecrated in May 1835, and opened in December¹⁸⁵.

¹⁷⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 6 December 1828, pp. 108-11.

¹⁸⁰Executive Council Minutes, 17 December 1828, EC 4/1, A.O.T., pp.388-90

¹⁸¹Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.26.

¹⁸²Bent, A., *The Tasmanian Almanack for the year of our Lord 1830*, p.68.

¹⁸³*K.O.S. mins.*, 10 October 1833, p.457.

¹⁸⁴Minutes of the Committee of Management of the King's Orphan Schools, 31 October 1833, C.S.O. 1/522/11340, A.O.T., p.156. The removal of the Male Orphan School was held up by the superintendent of the works appropriating part of their building, *K.O.S. mins.*: 10 October 1833, p.458 & 16 October 1833, p.461.

¹⁸⁵*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.67.

Most of the schools are still standing today at St John's Park. The two orphan schools are identical and placed on either side of the Church. Some of the surrounding land was allocated for a farm¹⁸⁶. K. Lorraine has perceived that,

The presence of St John's Church which separated the male and female wings shows the strong association believed to exist between religion and reformation, while the adjoining farm reflects the hope that the institution would ideally become self-sufficient and so less a burden on the colony¹⁸⁷.

The childrens' day was divided between education, religion and work. The children were educated by a monitorial system, presumably in basic reading, writing and arithmetic. However, their education may have been more extensive than this. Although no official evidence could be located upon the type of education the children received from 1828 to 1833, the *Colonial Times* shed some light on this issue. In June 1830 it expressed concern about a rumour that the Male Orphan School,

...is considered by those who conduct it more as a working asylum, than one where knowledge is to be imparted and the mind improved - that it is rather manual labour than intellectual exertion that is the ground work of the system and that the education is to be limited even below the common scale of some charitable foundations in our Mother Country.

The author of this article expressed regret if the school were

...being cramped by the silly prejudice that would portion out knowledge according to the present class in life of those who are there placed for instruction....

However, the author did not believe that the government could have contemplated such a scheme as Giblin, a well educated schoolmaster, was in charge¹⁸⁸. The *Colonial Times* completely reversed its view in September. It now stated that the orphans should be apprenticed, as there was a huge demand for their services. A

¹⁸⁶G.O. 33/68, despatch no. 143, p.461 as cited by Lorraine, K., "Perception of disadvantage: an analysis of government and public attitudes toward the care of orphan and destitute children 1828-1879", BEd thesis University of Tasmania (1983), p.12.

¹⁸⁷Lorraine, K., "Perception of disadvantage: an analysis of government and public attitudes toward the care of orphan and destitute children 1828-1879", BEd thesis, University of Tasmania (1983), p.43.

¹⁸⁸*Colonial Times*, 25 June 1830, vol. 15, no. 738.

fear was expressed that there was more concentration on instruction than preparing them for their class position, as,

...although we fully go along with the teaching every person both to read and write, we most decidedly think, that among the lower classes, whatever in the one goes beyond the being able to read the bible, and in the other the writing one's own name, much more frequently produces harm than good¹⁸⁹.

Mr Giblin, with his sons' assistance, certainly taught such subjects as Latin, French, drawing, history, geography and astronomy at his New Town Academy, which he went to after teaching at the Male Orphan School.

The orphans attended an Anglican service at St David's Church every Sunday, until they moved into their new buildings at New Town, when the service was held at the school until St Johns was opened. Children at the Female Orphan School were trained and employed in domestic economy. Needlework was sold and pieces commissioned¹⁹⁰. When the Committee of Management approved the Master of the Male Orphan School's request that a tailor be attached to the establishment¹⁹¹, a letter from the Colonial Secretary informed the Committee that the convict tailor could also teach his trade to some of the boys¹⁹². A shoemaker was also appointed to the establishment and engaged to teach some of the boys this "useful" trade¹⁹³. Although Arthur had approved of these appointments in 1831 and 1832, the men were not sent until February 1833¹⁹⁴. The appointment of these two men was necessary as the childrens' clothes were very ragged¹⁹⁵, so the appointments also reduced the expense of clothing the children¹⁹⁶.

¹⁸⁹*Colonial Times*, 3 September 1830, vol, 15, no. 749.

¹⁹⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 15 May 1828, pp. 27-8.

¹⁹¹*K.O.S. mins.*, 28 April 1831, pp. 314-15.

¹⁹²*K.O.S. mins.*, 26 May 1831, p. 322.

¹⁹³*K.O.S. mins.*, 23 June 1831, pp.330-1, 27 September 1832, pp.403-4, 22 November 1832, p.408.

¹⁹⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 14 February 1833, p.421.

¹⁹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶*K.O.S. mins.*, 23 June 1831, p.330 & 28 April 1831, p.315.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur was deeply involved in the management of the King's Orphan Schools. He made several visits to the two schools and he insisted upon regularly reading the Minutes Book of the Committee of Management. In a memorandum to Colonial Secretary Burnett dated 1 June 1828, Arthur wanted the Committee informed that he needed the Minutes Book on the day after each meeting as a means of "...readily affording the Local Government a general view of their proceedings..."¹⁹⁷. Arthur's view of the proceedings of the Committee of Management could be most accurately described as specific. The Minutes Book is strewn with marginal notes from Arthur on the most minute details. It seems as though Arthur had to approve every admission. For example, in March 1829 the Committee of Management admitted Edwin Burns, aged 9, on the foundation which provoked Arthur to comment, "I beg to be informed who this Child is - & in future this information will be desirable when Children are admitted on the foundation!". If children had parents, Arthur insisted that it be ascertained that the parents were unable to contribute to their support¹⁹⁸. In one case of a morally upright woman who was unable to support her three children, Arthur insisted that the father, whose whereabouts were unknown, should be pursued and made to assist in the support of his children¹⁹⁹.

A cynical view of Lieutenant Governor Arthur's involvement in the Orphan Schools would be that his concern only extended to reducing expenses. As a supremely efficient bureaucrat this was undoubtedly one of Arthur's foremost concerns, but, as a humanitarian, it may be that he found it necessary to insist upon this so that the genuinely destitute were cared for. Arthur's compassion is illustrated by the case of the Woods' children. Arthur approved of the entry of the four children of the late incompetent Principal Superintendent of Convicts in 1832²⁰⁰. Woods had been suspended from office when he refused a transfer to a

¹⁹⁷C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., p. 152.

¹⁹⁸*K.O.S. mins.*, 10 July 1830, p. 230.

¹⁹⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 17 April 1830, p. 210.

²⁰⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 14 June 1832, pp. 389-90.

less important job at the same salary and failed to answer charges of neglect of duty. Arthur's concern for his family had led him to give Woods a second chance. However, Woods refused the offer of a lower paid post and deserted his wife and children to return to his drunken ways in England²⁰¹. Arthur did not even interfere when he discovered that Mrs Woods was about to leave the colony also²⁰².

Parents were able to see their children on set days. For instance, in May 1828 the Committee of Management suggested that the first Mondays in January, April, July and October might be publicly advertised for this purpose. On these days parents could visit their children between eleven o'clock in the morning and two o'clock in the afternoon, but the Master or Matron had to be present²⁰³.

The care used to avoid moral contamination continued to be a consideration when releasing children. Thus the Committee of Management was careful to ensure that children were only released to their parents' care after the parents were found to be "sober", "industrious" and good providers²⁰⁴. Furthermore, the Committee of Management required the parents to have "satisfactory reasons" for requesting their children²⁰⁵. At a Committee meeting on 3 April 1830 the Committee noted that people were about to apply for some of the elder girls as servants, it implied this was a good idea because of the crowded state of the Female Orphan School²⁰⁶. The applicants included wives of government officials, such as Mrs Burnett²⁰⁷. The Committee delayed their approval because one member thought it was "improper"²⁰⁸. This member was Reverend Bedford²⁰⁹. By late November

²⁰¹Shaw, A. G. L., *Sir George Arthur, Bart., 1784-1854* (Melbourne, 1980), p.136.

²⁰²*K.O.S. mins.*, 12 July 1832, p.394.

²⁰³*K.O.S. mins.*, 15 May 1828, p. 27.

²⁰⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 10 April 1830, p. 209.

²⁰⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 24 April 1830, p. 212.

²⁰⁶*K.O.S. mins.*, 3 April 1830, pp. 207-8.

²⁰⁷*K.O.S. mins.*, 29 May 1830, p. 220.

²⁰⁸*K.O.S. mins.*, 22 May 1830, pp. 217-18.

²⁰⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 29 May 1830, p. 219.

1830 Reverend Bedford had been persuaded by the overcrowding in the Female Orphan School of the need to assign the elder girls as servants. The Committee now unanimously agreed on assigning one sixteen year old girl, five fourteen year old girls and two fifteen year old girls. Arthur approved of this. In addition, there were four girls listed as being assigned to particular ladies, one of which was Mrs Arthur. The Committee promised to consider every future case carefully and in relation to the circumstances of the establishment. Arthur regarded this as, "...a most essential precaution"²¹⁰. In November 1831, apprenticeships for orphans became a matter of arrangement between the parents of children old enough to be apprenticed and their employers²¹¹.

There was a delicate balance between rescuing children from "immoral" surroundings and avoiding the admittance of children who had already succumbed to their surroundings. This is evident in two applications considered by the Committee of Management on 15 November 1828. The Committee recommended that Jane Hangan's application on behalf of her twelve year old son be approved. Jane Hangan was described as an unmarried woman with five children who was "...living in a very immoral manner". The fact that the "poor Lad" had recently lost a brother to the executioner also influenced the committee. Arthur approved the application for admission to the fourth class. The other application was made by a Mr Gilles on behalf of "...a Girl of very depraved habits...". The committee deferred their consideration of this application until the state of the Female Orphan School was more settled, but Arthur's marginal note read, "there would seem much danger in this!"²¹². On the 27 December 1828 this girl's application was approved²¹³.

²¹⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 27 November 1830, pp. 266-9.

²¹¹*K.O.S. mins.*, 10 November 1831, pp. 358-9.

²¹²*K.O.S. mins.*, 15 November 1828, pp. 100-101.

²¹³*K.O.S. mins.*, 27 December 1828, pp. 114-15.

There was one case of a child from the King's Orphan School being arrested. Eleanor McDonald was apprehended on the 30 June 1828 because she was suspected of committing a felony before being admitted. She was gaoled²¹⁴ but the chairman of the Committee of Management, Mr Hone, attempted to obtain bail for her. He was unsuccessful because she was apparently only under examination. Mr Hone did not rest there but also wrote to the Police Magistrate²¹⁵. There were no special provisions for education and the prevention of "moral contamination" of colonially convicted children or for the children of female prisoners with short sentences that were housed in the gaol²¹⁶.

²¹⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 3 July 1828, pp. 43-4.

²¹⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 5 July 1828, pp. 45-6.

²¹⁶Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.63.

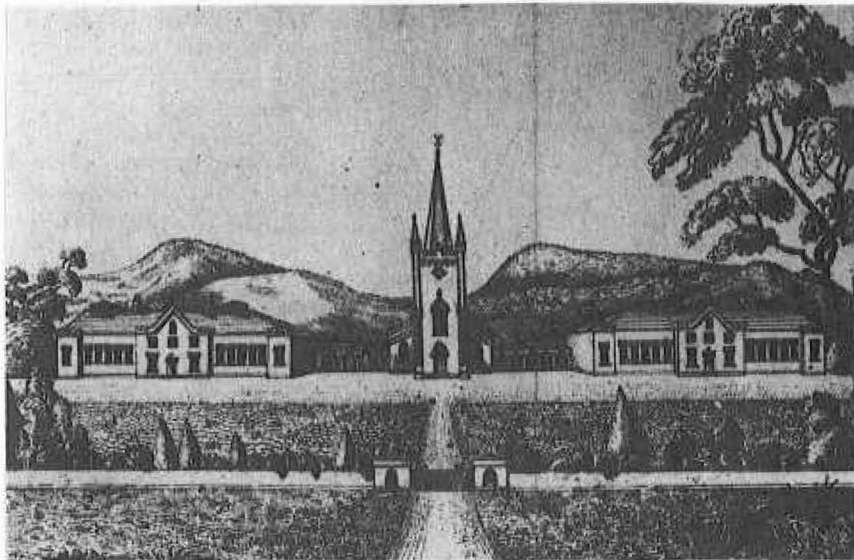
**ADMITTANCE NUMBERS AT THE KING'S ORPHAN SCHOOLS AS
INDICATED BY THE MINUTES BOOK OF THE ITS COMMITTEE OF
MANAGEMENT, S.W.D. 24, A.O.T.:**

Year	Admittance Numbers
1828	133 in December (minutes, 27 December, p.115)
1829	184 in December (minutes, 5 December, p.186)
1830	91 boys in July (minutes, 24 July, p.235)
1831	
1832	
1833	113 girls & 116 boys in October (minutes, 10 October, p.457 & p.459)

James Ross claimed that there were usually about 80 children in each orphan school²¹⁷. Perhaps the figures he provided for the number of children in the orphan schools at the beginning of 1830 is more accurate than the number suggested by the records of admittances in the Minutes Book of the Committee of Management for the King's Orphan Schools. Ross claimed that there were 77 boys in the Male Orphan School and 64 girls in the Female Orphan School, with an additional fifty or so children who were admitted, but could not enter the schools until there was more room²¹⁸.

²¹⁷Ross, J., *The Van Diemen's Land Anniversary and Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1831*, pp.101-2.

²¹⁸Ross, J., *The Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1830*, p.251.



Charles Bruce: 'New church and King's Orphan School, New Town'.
Etching, 1831. Allport Library

Taken from Robson, L.L., *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1 (Melbourne, 1983), p. 284.



Belle Vue, the original location of the Female Orphan School, can still be seen today. It is located between Macquarie Street and Fitzroy Place.



One of the King's Orphan Schools, St. John's Park, New Town.

CHAPTER FIVE: FAILINGS OF THE KING'S ORPHAN SCHOOLS

The care taken of the children in the King's Orphan Schools was far from ideal. Despite the vigilance of the Committee of Management and Ladies Committee, some members of the staff abused the children. In 1828 the Master and Matron of the Female Orphan School, Mr and Mrs Chorley, were dismissed for "defrauding the government". They had been taking more government supplies than the orphan school required, and, despite this, depriving the children of food. Some of the girls' food was fed to the Chorley's poultry, while the children were left to scrounge around the kitchen rubbish and beg convict servants for food. It was the convict servants who reported upon the Chorleys' activities to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management was appalled and called for their immediate dismissal. The matter appeared farcical when Mr Chorley tried to avoid attending a committee meeting by sending his wife to say he was sick. This ploy was unsuccessful²¹⁹. Mr Chorley was also suspected of being too heavy-handed in, as his wife said, keeping the girls "quiet & orderly"²²⁰. The committee concluded that,

...under the domestic management of Persons wanting common Honesty so much as the present Master & Matron appear to do, there is no safety either for the Government-or the Children, and that neither a Ladies Committee nor a Committee of Management can effectually protect the one or the other²²¹.

The Lieutenant Governor asked the Committee to hear out any explanation the Chorleys wanted to give. At the same time, he noted that,

²¹⁹Report of the Committee of Management, 26 July 1828 in *K.O.S. mins.*, 9 August 1828, pp. 59-67.

²²⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 63-4.

²²¹Report of the Committee of Management, 9 August 1828 in *K.O.S. mins.*, 9 August 1828, p. 69.

These Establishments to be extensively useful must be placed on the most rigid system of economy which is consistent with the nourishment of the children...²²².

Rations for everyone were to be "...sufficient and no more than sufficient!"²²³. The Committee did not change their minds²²⁴. In late November 1828 the Chorleys were replaced by Reverend Norman and his wife²²⁵. Archdeacon Scott had recommended convict schoolmasters because respectable free people could only be employed at very high salaries. His warning could have been a premonition. He warned that,

...they are not very scrupulous as to the means by which they procure their subsistence. I do not say actual robbery but such conversion of property which they can more easily reconcile to their feelings than persons of a better condition²²⁶.

Scott's reaction to news of the Chorley's misconduct was to exclaim that,

the air of these Colonies intensely attracts people who come here with a roguish mania altho' their intentions at first might have been good & for fear I should catch the disease the sooner I go the better²²⁷.

He believed that Arthur would not find a substitute and thought he must tolerate the Chorleys, particularly as he believed Reverend Bedford was probably exaggerating anyway²²⁸. The Chorleys asked for subsistence and a passage back to England, Arthur said this was not in his power²²⁹. Naturally, the *Colonial Times* sided with the Chorleys and proclaimed that Arthur should pay this passage²³⁰. This paper reported on the 14 April that the Chorleys had opened a school in Murray Street²³¹.

²²²Arthur's minute, 16 August 1828, pp. 70-1.

²²³*Ibid.*, p. 70.

²²⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 16 August 1828, pp. 78-9.

²²⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 6 December 1828, p. 107.

²²⁶Enclosure 1; Scott to Arthur, 25 March 1828, enclosed in Arthur to Huskisson, 14 April 1828, *H.R.A.*, III.vii, pp. 140-1.

²²⁷Scott to Arthur, 21 August 1828 in *Papers of Sir G. Arthur*, vol. 13, M.L. A2173: Letters from Scott 1824-38.

²²⁸*Ibid.*

²²⁹Chorley to Arthur, 3 December 1828, C.S.O. 1/122/3073, A.O.T., pp.198-9.

²³⁰*Colonial Times*, March 13 1829, vol. 14, no. 671.

²³¹*Colonial Times*, April 14 1829, vol. 14, no. 677.

In 1830 the Master of the Male Orphan School, Mr Giblin, was reported to be abusing his charges. He was accused of sending children into the bush to collect firewood which he sold for his own profit in Hobart Town. He was also reported to have beaten the boys, possibly contributing to the death of one²³². As soon as Arthur was informed of this he requested that a respectable person be immediately placed in charge of the Male Orphan School. The Committee placed Mr Stone, master of the National School, in temporary charge²³³. Mr Giblin resigned in early 1831²³⁴, set up an Academy in New Town²³⁵ and died a respected member of the community²³⁶. Like the Chorleys, Mr Giblin's audacity seems to have had no bounds. He wrote a memorial to Arthur seeking an allowance after the day of his suspension²³⁷. Arthur had responded to the Committee's early fears about Mr Giblin's misconduct in a memorandum dated 31 August 1830. He recalled that on his last visit to the Male Orphan School the progress of the children was very slow, with

...a want of energy and elasticity of mind in all the boys, especially of the first class, and I am quite certain there must be drowsiness somewhere!.

Arthur had insisted that Mr Giblin's conduct be thoroughly investigated²³⁸

Arthur expressed concern for the competency of Mr Stone as Master of the Male Orphan School. Such concern was misdirected. Arthur's concern was that Mr Stone was not sufficiently qualified, he was looking for a man of "...general superior attainments..."²³⁹. The Committee of Management's report expressed satisfaction in Mr Stone's abilities. The Committee discovered that he had

²³²*K.O.S. mins.*, 17 January 1831, pp. 281-88.

²³³*K.O.S. mins.*, 18 January 1831, pp. 289-91.

²³⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 22 January 1831, pp. 292-3.

²³⁵Melville, H., *Van Diemen's Land Annual for the year 1833.*, advertisement towards the back of the annual.

²³⁶Pearce, K., unpublished report on the orphan schools.

²³⁷*K.O.S. mins.*, 28 April 1831, p. 313.

²³⁸Arthur's memorandum, 31 August 1830 in C.S.O. 1/490/10836, A.O.T., pp. 9-11.

²³⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 10 March 1831, pp.306-8.

improved the boys' learning, was disposed to accept the Committee's advice and his moral reputation was "unimpeachable"²⁴⁰. Mr Chorley and Mr Giblin had both been guilty of disobeying the orders of the Committee of Management²⁴¹. Arthur confirmed Mr and Mrs Stone as Master and Matron of the Male Orphan School²⁴².

Two beadles at the Male Orphan School also had to be dismissed for drunkenness. The first dismissal came after Mr Giblin informed the Committee of Management that the man was sent in to Hobart Town on the morning of 26 December 1828 for supplies, but only returned that night in a drunken state. He had apparently often been intoxicated, this time the establishment's cart was observed, "...standing on Wellington Bridge for some Hours, loaded, and without any one to watch it...". Arthur's opinion was very clear and concise, namely, "Let him by all means be removed a drunkard is never to be trusted- notify to the Brigade Major"²⁴³. The other case occurred in the following year. Mr Giblin informed committee that

...owing to William Burns the Bedel making an improper use of his Ration Rum, he and the Prisoner Servants conducted themselves so ill a few days since as thereby to cause much insubordination...²⁴⁴.

This man was soon leaving for England with the Veteran Company anyway. Arthur's note on this incident read,

The Colonial Secretary will Notify to the Town adjutant that Private Burns of the Veteran Company is to be withdrawn from the Orphan Establishment.-The School Committee may intimate to Mrs Burns that her services [as nurse] are no longer required...²⁴⁵.

These incidents suggest that the veteran staff may have been more of a problem than the convict staff.

²⁴⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 17 May 1831, pp. 317-19.

²⁴¹Chorley: *K.O.S. mins.*, 12 July 1828, pp. 49-50, Giblin: *K.O.S. mins.*, 28 August 1830, p. 244 & *K.O.S. mins.*, 15 January 1831, pp. 278-9.

²⁴²*K.O.S. mins.*, 2 June 1831, pp. 325-6.

²⁴³*K.O.S. mins.*, 27 December 1828, p. 115.

²⁴⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 28 March 1829, p.139.

²⁴⁵*Ibid.*

The behaviour of the convict servants was generally good. Many seemed to genuinely care for the children. For instance, it was convict servants who reported upon Chorley and Giblin. The Committee had praised the three servants who informed upon the Chorleys for conducting themselves with "...great propriety, not retorting when loaded with the most opprobrious epithets; especially by the Matron"²⁴⁶. One of the servants at the Female Orphan School had sometimes shared his bread with the hungry female orphans²⁴⁷. Although Arthur approved the Committee's suggestion that the convict servants be treated as assigned servants in private families, "...as an encouragement to good conduct...", in November 1828²⁴⁸, this was still not implemented by January 1832 when the Matron of the Female Orphan School reported her fear that servants provided with insufficient rations might take the childrens'²⁴⁹. Another instance of a long delay in the Committee of Management's recommendations on convicts servants being implemented is the case of William Summers. Summers acted as clerk and storekeeper at the Female Orphan School. In June 1830 the Committee recommended that he be given a small monetary reward for good conduct²⁵⁰. The Committee reiterated this recommendation in August 1831, along with a recommendation for an additional reward²⁵¹. The Committee provided Arthur with yet another reminder in December, this time complete with the previous recommendations²⁵². The Committee recommended the memorials of William Summers and John Marshfield for tickets of leave in January 1833²⁵³. Marshfield was refused a ticket of leave, prompting Mr Stone to bring the matter before the Committee, who, in turn, brought the case before Arthur²⁵⁴. The reason provided

²⁴⁶*Ibid.*, p.64.

²⁴⁷Report of the Committee of Management, 26 July 1828 in *K.O.S. mins.*, 9 August 1828, pp.62-3.

²⁴⁸*K.O.S. mins.*, 8 November 1828, p. 96.

²⁴⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 5 January 1832, p.367.

²⁵⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 26 June 1830, p.227.

²⁵¹*K.O.S. mins.*, 4 August 1831, pp.338-9.

²⁵²*K.O.S. mins.*, 15 December 1831, p.365.

²⁵³*K.O.S. mins.*, 31 January 1833, pp. 417-18.

²⁵⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 30 May 1833, pp.433-4.

by the Colonial Secretary was that the man had not been in the colony long enough²⁵⁵. William Summers was granted his ticket of leave, but offered to continue to work at the Female Orphan School²⁵⁶. In September 1833 the Committee recommended that the convict servants should be replaced with free servants when the boys entered their new premises²⁵⁷.

Another indication of a failure in the management of the orphan schools is the number of children who absconded. One of these was William Henry Smith, aged eleven, who ran away before breakfast on 16 September 1828. His father returned him the next day, but he was not accepted because of the length of time before he had been returned. The committee approved this action on Mr Giblin's part,

...especially as they find from Mr Giblin that the Boy's habits, propensities, and demeanour were of so vicious a character as to endanger the moral welfare of every other Lad²⁵⁸.

James Darke was another runaway who was brought back on the afternoon of his disappearance²⁵⁹. He was punished by a public flogging and confinement for three days on bread and water. Other boys punished that week were one boy for bad language and another for having buttons in his possession which were not his²⁶⁰. There were several girl runaways too. When two girls ran away on the same day in August 1831, Reverend Bedford visited the Female Orphan School to ensure there was no "undue severity" in the treatment of the girls²⁶¹. One case of absconding was directly related to the misbehaviour of a convict servant and a boy's fear of punishment. On 22 September 1831 it was reported that John Newby had been found in the bedroom of the convict laundress. He absconded

²⁵⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 13 June 1833, pp.434-5.

²⁵⁶*Ibid.*, pp.436-7.

²⁵⁷*K.O.S. mins.*, 12 September 1833, pp. 451-2.

²⁵⁸*K.O.S. mins.*, 20 September 1828, p. 88.

²⁵⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 30 October 1830, p.262.

²⁶⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 6 November 1830, p.263.

²⁶¹*K.O.S. mins.*, 11 August 1831, pp.342-3.

with another boy because he supposedly feared punishment²⁶². Newby had run away to his mother²⁶³. At the same Committee meeting four girls were reported to have absconded to their parents²⁶⁴. One father was so dissatisfied with the care taken of this son that he removed him by pretending to buy him a pair of shoes²⁶⁵.

There was also one case of an employer expressing dissatisfaction with the conduct of an orphan school graduate. On 13 October 1831 the Committee of Management received a letter from a Mr Nicholls complaining of the conduct of Mary Law, a girl from the orphan school placed in his wife's service²⁶⁶.

Overcrowding was a major problem. The orphan schools rapidly became so overcrowded that their aims were jeopardised. By March 1829 the Committee acknowledged that many applications were rejected because there was not enough room to accommodate more children²⁶⁷. At the same time, the doctor expressed his concern that overcrowding endangered the childrens' health. Without the ability to separate sick children from healthy children, he apprehended "serious consequences".²⁶⁸ This led Arthur to visit the two schools. He arranged for the "Stable" at the Male Orphan School to be converted into an infirmary and extra accommodation for twelve to fourteen boys by affixing hammocks in the Dining Hall. For the Female Orphan School, Arthur arranged for the Engineer to inspect whether some girls could be accommodated in the roof. The other alternative was to convert the school room into a dormitory and hold school in the yard. Arthur sought whichever was the least expensive option²⁶⁹. By 17 October 1829 children were being approved for entry to the schools, but unable to attend until there was

²⁶²*K.O.S. mins.*, 22 September 1831, p.349.

²⁶³*K.O.S. mins.*, 13 October 1831, pp. 351-2.

²⁶⁴*Ibid.*, p.354.

²⁶⁵*K.O.S. mins.*, 18 October 1828, p. 92.

²⁶⁶*K.O.S. mins.*, 13 October 1831, p.353.

²⁶⁷*K.O.S. mins.*, 7 March 1829, p.133.

²⁶⁸*K.O.S. mins.*, 21 March 1829, pp. 136-7.

²⁶⁹*K.O.S. mins.*, 21 March 1829, p. 137.

more room²⁷⁰. An application from a male prisoner for the admittance of his four daughters was rejected because of overcrowding, however, the Committee suggested that the children be temporarily placed in the Female Factory²⁷¹. This was a reversal of the normal procedure.

The new orphan school buildings were designed by John Lee Archer, a man responsible for designing many convict buildings, and the architecture of the orphan school buildings has been described as very penal. The buildings were large and difficult to heat. One historian has discovered that there was also convict terminology in the school regime. Thus, the orphans were "mustered" and "inspected"²⁷². Lieutenant Governor Arthur also insisted upon a strict adherence to only admitting children of the stipulated "classifications".

Lieutenant Governor Arthur appears to have been concerned about the expenditure of the orphan schools almost to the point of obsession. This concern for expenditure was largely imposed upon Arthur by the British government. Expenditure was a perpetual concern to the British government. This was expressed well by Archdeacon Scott in a private letter to Arthur, he stated,

Nothing is to be done for schools and then Lord Bathurst wonders no reformation takes place; I should wonder if it did!²⁷³.

In 1831 Arthur ordered the Committee of Management to intimate that the children of parents who had not paid for their support would be removed from the orphan schools²⁷⁴.

²⁷⁰*K.O.S. mins.*, 17 October 1829, p.177.

²⁷¹*K.O.S. mins.*, 11 December 1830, pp.270-1.

²⁷²Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.26.

²⁷³Scott to Arthur, 26 March 1827, *Papers of Sir G. Arthur*, vol. 13, .M.L. A2173: Letters from Scott, 1824-38.

²⁷⁴*K.O.S. mins.*, 30 June 1831, p.333.

The *Tasmanian and Austral-Asiatic Review* ardently criticised the management of the orphan schools in June 1830. It began by questioning why the government did not have a Committee of Management composed of public officers and private gentlemen as New South Wales did. The article claimed that public officers were not alone adequate members of such a committee as their positions were dependent upon the government. The two Reverend members were also criticised. Bedford because he did not entirely possess public favour and was a mere ministerial officer. Norman because he had "retiring habits". The article stressed the need for a Ladies Committee for female orphans, which should be composed of the wives of the chief public officers with Mrs Arthur at the head. The existing Ladies Committee cannot have been very active. The article's criticism became much more potent when it recounted that on a recent Sunday service there had been hardly a single child properly shod, and many stockingless. The poor position of the orphans was vividly evoked, with,

Their little legs appeared blue with the cold, as did their arms where the white sleeves, which instead of being, as they ought to have been, properly and firmly attached to the gown, were pin'd up on one side and falling down on the other, exhibited the naked arm of the little orphan shivering in the cold.

The orphans' appearance was improved on the following Sunday, but the author speculated on why there were fewer children attending the service. Surely the government could provide the establishment with a shoemaker as, "The Government is their parent, their only parent and friend!"²⁷⁵. Lack of clothing emerged as a problem again the following year when there was not enough clothes for the boys to attend church three times a week during Lent²⁷⁶. Again, the children were regarded as not fit to be seen because of the ragged state of their clothes in January 1833²⁷⁷. The *Colonial Times*, which had been bought by Henry Melville in March 1830²⁷⁸, once again acted as the foremost authority on

²⁷⁵*Tasmanian and Austral-Asiatic Review*, 25 June 1830, vol. 5, no. 174.

²⁷⁶*K.O.S. mins.*, 3 March 1831, pp.303-4.

²⁷⁷*K.O.S. mins.*, 31 January 1833, p.418.

²⁷⁸*A.D.B.*, vol. 2, p.221.

the orphans when it responded to this article on July 2 1830. It defended the management of the orphan schools, stating,

It probably so happens, that this very Institution is more carefully watched, more ably conducted, and has to boast of more real order, cleanliness, regularity, and propriety, than falls to the lot of any similar one, in any place....

It also stated that the orphans had an ample supply of shoes of the very strongest quality without regard to expense²⁷⁹.

Henry Melville described the King's Orphan Schools as "...perhaps the very best [institution] ever undertaken in the Colony", with the children being cared for with "praiseworthy attention"²⁸⁰. This was high praise indeed coming from one of Arthur's critics (Melville was shortly to be prosecuted by Arthur²⁸¹, and imprisoned for contempt of court²⁸²).

The establishment of infant schools in 1832 could signify the success or failure of the orphan schools. This is dependent upon whether they represented an extension of the principles behind the orphan schools, or a realisation that the aims of the orphan school could only be achieved with younger children. Actually, the establishment of infant schools seems to have been due to a realisation of both these factors. Archdeacon Broughton asked Arthur in 1830 whether a school had been established which kept infants "separate" from elder boys & girls for their morals and "delaying" familiarity with vice²⁸³. The address from the Committee of the Hobart Town Infant School Society in May 1832 stated that it was true that all the benefits in the instruction of the rising generation had not been realised. They believed this failure to be due to the "predominance

²⁷⁹*Colonial Times*, 2 July 1830, vol. 15, no. 739.

²⁸⁰Melville, H., *The history of Van Diemen's Land from the year 1824 to 1835 inclusive* (1835), ed. G. Mackaness, part 2 (Dubbo, 1978), p.5.

²⁸¹*A.D.B.*, vol. 1, p. 37.

²⁸²*A.D.B.*, vol. 2, p.221.

²⁸³Broughton to Arthur, 16 August 1830, Papers of Sir G. Arthur M.L. A2172, vol. 12, letters from Bishop Broughton and Reverend S. Marsden, 1824-36.

of improper habits engendered in 'infancy,' strengthened by daily neglect, and encouraged by daily example..". The Society aimed to prevent time being given for,

...bad principles to be engrafted on the 'infant mind'-for vicious propensities to gain the ascendancy-for evil habits to take root and flourish-for the intellectual powers to be destroyed for want of exercise.

They aimed to educate children aged from 18 months to 5 or 6 years. With these children being left to roam the streets they asked, "From such a training-from such a course what may be expected, but a proficiency in crime and a mass of juvenile delinquency?"²⁸⁴. The patroness of the Infant School Society was Mrs Arthur²⁸⁵ and her husband lent £250 of public money to the society and urged his superiors to make this a gift²⁸⁶. There was some common membership of the Committee of Management for the King's Orphan Schools as well. Reverend Bedford, Reverend Norman, Mr Montagu, Mr Hone and Mr Yeoland were all members of the Infant School Society Committee as well²⁸⁷.

²⁸⁴*Colonial Times*, 12 June 1832, vol. 17, no. 842.

²⁸⁵Melville, H., *Van Diemen's Land Almanack for the year 1833*, p.241.

²⁸⁶Robson, L. L., *A History of Tasmania*, vol. 1 (Melbourne, 1983), p.285.

²⁸⁷Melville, H., *Van Diemen's Land Almanack for the year 1833*, p.241.

CHAPTER SIX:

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE POINT PUER CONVICT BOYS ESTABLISHMENT

The recognition of a need for an establishment like Point Puer was much more confined to official Van Demonian sources than the call for an Orphan School had been. Undoubtedly this was related to the orphan care being in the public domain, whereas provision for juvenile convicts remained a government concern. The foundation of Point Puer also owed much more to Arthur's initiative.

One person who did bring the position of juvenile convicts to the public's attention was James Ross, the editor of the *Hobart Town Courier*, who also published the *Government Gazette* and was a friend of Arthur's²⁸⁸. As such, perhaps it was no coincidence that his views on juvenile convicts seem to coincide with Arthur's. In January 1828 an article appeared in the *Hobart Town Courier* on the uproar created in England by a seven year old boy being convicted of theft and sentenced to transportation for life. Ross wrote,

had the little boy, (little innocent we were going to call him) been sent to gaol for six or twelve months, and then let loose to commit or be the tool of others to commit more crimes, he would have run the usual career, and have come to Van Diemen's Land at the age of fifteen or sixteen, a confirmed rogue. But at an earlier age, the vicious propensity may be nipped, the evil connection being broken, instruction and better example may be the means of snatching him from the gulf into which he was about to fall. In Van Diemen's Land he will be immediately employed in tending sheep, or some other retired and uncontaminating occupation,- the government will be relieved of all expense regarding him, and in all human probability he will become a useful and honest member of society²⁸⁹.

²⁸⁸West, J., *History of Tasmania*, (1852) ed. A. G. L. Shaw (Sydney, 1971), p.99.

²⁸⁹*Hobart Town Courier*, 5 January 1828, vol. 1, no. 12..

Lieutenant Governor Arthur was concerned about the increase in the number of juvenile convicts being sent to the colony. In 1827 he lamented that the number of convict mechanics and agriculturists arriving in the colony bore,

...no proportion to the Pick-pockets and other Idlers who appear scarcely capable of turning their hand to any employment. In the "Asia" Transport, just now in the Harbour, there are no less than 40 Boys, some of them entirely useless, and generally so mischievous are these corrupt little rogues that they are the dread of every Family²⁹⁰.

In August 1828 Arthur acknowledged the arrival of the *William Miles* with a larger proportion of boys than usual. He found that many of these boys had already served 3 years in hulks and submitted that,

...as they must inevitably become more vicious from the influence of the baneful example of their companions in the Hulks, there would be much greater hope of reforming these young offenders if they were transported as early as possible after receiving sentence - for, as it is, those under short sentences will become their own masters within a very limited period, without having felt sufficiently the discipline to which convicts transported to the Colony should be subjected.

Although a copy of this despatch was forwarded to Secretary Peel of the Home Department, there was no tangible result²⁹¹.

In a despatch dated 30 May 1829 Arthur acknowledged the arrival of 170 male convicts on the 'Georgiana'. He found that,

On personally inspecting the prisoners according to my custom, my attention was attracted by the very large proportion of boys, of whom no less than 50 were transported by the vessel and it has been difficult to assign them as the settlers decline to take boys except they can have with them some effective farming man.

Arthur also reiterated his remarks of August 1828 on the need to prevent the contamination of congregation in the hulks by transporting the boy convicts to the colonies as soon as possible²⁹².

²⁹⁰Arthur to Goderich, 1 December 1827 in *H.R.A.*, III.vi, pp.369-70.

²⁹¹Arthur to Under Secretary Stanley, 12 August 1828 in *H.R.A.*, III. vii, pp. 470-1.

²⁹²Arthur to Under Secretary Twiss, 30 May 1829, pp. 342-3, C.O. 280/20, P.R.O. reel 242.

Arthur versus Whateley:

Lieutenant Governor Arthur's penal philosophy is encapsulated in his *Observations Upon Secondary Punishment*, printed in Hobart Town in 1833²⁹³. This work was written in response to Richard Whately's, the Archbishop of Dublin's, *Thoughts on Secondary Punishments in a Letter to Earl Grey*. Whateley wrote in favour of penitentiaries and criticised transportation as a form of secondary punishment²⁹⁴. Arthur defended the transportation system. Arthur advocated that juveniles should be transported after their first offence, rather than being incarcerated in penitentiaries or hulks, as he believed these places encouraged crime²⁹⁵. Despite this, the two antagonists actually agreed upon some of the faults in the management of juvenile convicts. Whateley was anxious that "...all mixture of juvenile delinquents with older, and probably more hardened villains, be carefully avoided"²⁹⁶. He regarded this as a reason why magistrates tended to dismiss children without charge, a practice he described as extremely "pernicious" which meant these children would not be reformed. Whately felt that the culprit was likely to be eventually captured, as,

the fisherman who throws back the small fish into the water, in expectation that when they are grown large he shall catch them again, has seldom better ground for being confident of this, than we have for expecting that he who in childhood has been encouraged, by the prospect of impunity, to commence a career of crime, will persevere in it, as he grows up,- will have formed early habits, too strong to be subsequently eradicated by the denunciation of punishment against the man, and will probably end his days on the gallows, or in the hulks²⁹⁷.

However, Arthur went further than Whately had done in his examination of juvenile delinquency. Arthur looked at the origins of crime and the best method of reformation. He wrote that thieves chiefly came from,

²⁹³Arthur, G., *Observations Upon Secondary Punishment* (Hobart Town, 1833).

²⁹⁴Whately, R., *Thoughts on Secondary Punishment in a letter to Earl Grey* (London, 1832).

²⁹⁵Arthur, G., *Observations Upon Secondary Punishment* (Hobart Town, 1833), p.43.

²⁹⁶Whateley, R., *Thoughts on Secondary Punishment in a letter to Earl Grey* (London, 1832), p.17.

²⁹⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

...among the poor and the ignorant, from those who have been pinched with penury and exposed to temptation, who have been the victims of an unwilling and unavoidable ignorance of the force of moral obligations, from the circumstances in which they have been placed in infancy...²⁹⁸.

He went on to state that,

We are in a great measure the creatures of education. We transgress the laws according to the strength of the temptations to which we may be exposed, and the acquired capacity to resist them, which religion, education, and reflection have raised up within us²⁹⁹.

The King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer both attempted to instil in their inmates this "acquired capacity" to resist temptations. Another important element of reformation for Arthur was teaching a trade, so that the convict had a "means of gaining his bread honestly" upon his release³⁰⁰.

The case of "Nutts":

Lieutenant Governor Arthur appears to have been expressing himself with greater clarity on his concerns for boy convicts in 1832. The case of George Thompson, alias "Nutts", illustrates this. In a despatch of 25 July 1832, Arthur wrote to Hay at the Colonial Office that convicts could be reformed more easily if they were transported immediately after their offence rather than being able to serve an "apprenticeship of crime". Arthur noted the "fact" that

...all the most depraved characters, who have suffered the last penalty of the law in this Colony, have been those, who, from their infancy, had been trained to vice by being at repeated times, inmates of different Gaols in England.

Arthur enclosed a confession which Reverend Bedford had extracted from "Nutts" on the eve of his execution as this exemplified Arthur's point³⁰¹. "Nutts" was executed over two years before, on 17 May 1830, for stealing from a settler's

²⁹⁸Arthur, G., *Observations Upon Secondary Punishment* (Hobart Town, 1833), p.23.

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 23-4.

³⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p.15

³⁰¹Arthur to Hay, 25 July 1832 in unpublished *H.R.A.*, III, ed. P. Chapman, pp.503-6.

house. "Nutts" was then aged twenty³⁰². His confession was an admission of his life of crime. It began,

When I was between eight and nine years old, I used to sleep with my mother, and wanting some money, I put my hand in her pocket, and stole sixpence, and, as I was not discovered a short time afterwards I stole something else and from that time, I was always pilfering. My Father was very indulgent, and died when I was about eleven years of age. Soon after I ran away from school. I had frequently done so before, I went into the field, but saw some chickens, I stole two of them, a boy whom I had known upwards of two years advised me to steal the fowls, I sold them to a man, who lived in our neighbourhood to whom my companion introduced me, for three shillings- he kept an old Iron shop and used to buy stolen things from boys- I gave my companion, half the money- I was always stealing, and mixing in bad company³⁰³.

"Nutts" became acquainted with "bad women" between twelve and thirteen years of age³⁰⁴. He was in and out of gaol, committing further robberies more or less as soon as he was freed³⁰⁵. "Nutts" also confessed that,

I have committed many robberies, which I do not recollect, I was always thieving, I do not think, that, I have stated more than three fourths of the robberies, I have committed, am most quite certain, as to the dates I spent the money, in drunkenness, and, debauching of all kinds³⁰⁶.

"Nutts" stated that he had committed the crime for which he was executed with a fellow convict named Newman³⁰⁷. Newman was also condemned to be executed, but through the victim's intervention on his behalf, mercy was shown to him in the form of transportation for life. The victim pleaded for Newman because of the good character his master attributed to him and because Newman had voluntarily revealed where the stolen goods were, which had been the basis of the case against the two³⁰⁸. The Executive Council which condemned "Nutts" and Newman was composed of Arthur, Chief Justice Pedder, Colonial Secretary

³⁰²Reverend Bedford to Arthur, 1 August 1832, enclosure 3 in *ibid.*, p.519.

³⁰³*Ibid.*

³⁰⁴*Ibid.*

³⁰⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 519-21.

³⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p.522.

³⁰⁷*Ibid.*

³⁰⁸Executive Council Minutes, EC 4/1, A.O.T., 6 May 1830, p.537 & p.540; 11 May 1830, p.541.

Burnett and Colonial Treasurer Thomas. Thomas had recommended their lives be spared as the stolen property had been restored and so many other prisoners were condemned. The Colonial Secretary and Chief Justice overruled him. Another factor in their sentence was the trouble bushrangers were causing to settlers³⁰⁹.

Nine days before Arthur wrote his despatch, there was a case under discussion by the Executive Council³¹⁰ which was very similar to "Nutts" and Newman's. Two convicts, Matthew Berry and John Chadwick, had been capitally convicted for "stealing in a dwelling house and robbery". This time the Council recommended Berry for mercy because of his youth, this being his first offence of the kind, and as he appeared to have been under the guidance of Chadwick. Mercy was shown to Berry in the form of transportation for life to Macquarie Harbour³¹¹. So the Executive Council was also openly expressing concern for a juvenile convict.

A comparison of the four convicts' records is very enlightening. "Nutts" had been originally tried at Middlesex in 1828 for burglary. He was sentenced to transportation for life, arriving in Van Diemen's Land on the 'Lady Harewood' in July 1829. His accompanying Gaol Report stated that he was well known to the police. The only colonial offence which appeared on his conduct record was "suspicion of Felony" dated 23 March 1830. This must have been the offence for which he was executed³¹². James Newman was transported for seven years for "stealing geese". He arrived in the colony on the 'Woodford' in 1828. His accompanying Gaol Report stated "Very bad an old offender good in Gaol", while his Hulk Report also described his behaviour as "good". Newman stated that he was transported for his first offence. He had committed one other offence in the

³⁰⁹Executive council minutes, EC 4/1, A.O.T., 6 May 1830, p.537.

³¹⁰All capital cases were reviewed by the Executive Council, this time the men present were Arthur, Chief Justice Pedder, Colonial Treasurer Thomas and Lieutenant Colonel Logan. Executive Council Minute, EC 4/2, A.O.T., 16 June 1832, p.381.

³¹¹Executive Council Minute, EC 4/2, A.O.T., 16 June 1832, p.381.

³¹²Register of male convicts 1804-39 (P-Y), CON 23/3, A.O.T., no. 443 & male convict indents, CON 31/42, A.O.T., no.443.

colony before being apprehended for burglary. This was being absent without leave in 1828³¹³. Matthew Berry, like "Nutts", had been tried at Middlesex in 1828. For stealing lead he was sentenced to transportation for 14 years, arriving on the 'Roslyn Castle' in late 1828. His gaol report stated his character to be "bad". He had a long list of colonial offences on his conduct record. These included such offences as being absent from muster for Church without leave, "Neglect of Duty & making use of very improper language to one of his fellow Laborers", being drunk and absconding³¹⁴. John Chadwick had been in the colony the longest. He was tried at Liverpool in 1821, being sentenced to transportation for 14 years. He arrived in the colony on the 'Prince of Orange' in 1822³¹⁵. Chadwick's colonial offences dated back to 1825 and were mostly for absconding³¹⁶. Overall, there seems to have been more leniency shown to juvenile offenders in 1832.

There were some schemes for juvenile convicts before Point Puer. Some of the boys were held at Ross while awaiting assignment³¹⁷. Other selected boys were trained at penal settlements. For instance, in October 1827 Arthur arranged for some boys to be sent to Macquarie Harbour to learn ship-building. In April 1830 these boys were joined by a group of 8 boys of bad character who were to be educated and instructed in their choice of a trade such as ship-building, carpentry, blacksmithing, tailoring or shoemaking. The boys were apparently not separated from the men³¹⁸. Point Puer was also preceded by a special "Boys' Factory" at

³¹³Male convict indents, CON 31/29, A.O.T., no.158.

³¹⁴Register of male convicts 1804-39 (A-F), CON 23/1, A.O.T., no. 1133 & male convict indents, CON 31/1, A.O.T., no. 1133.

³¹⁵Register of male convicts 1804-39 (A-F), CON 23/1, A.O.T., no.479.

³¹⁶Male convict indents, CON 31/6, A.O.T., no. 479.

³¹⁷Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the deveilopment of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.24.

³¹⁸*Tasmanian*, 18 October 1827; CSO 1/454/10130, Arthur's memo, 9 April 1830, A.O.T.; C.S.O. 43, Colonial Secretary to Commandant, Port Arthur, 30 April 1830, A.O.T.; B862, Rev. William Schofield to Commandant, Macquarie Harbour, 29 May 1831, M.L. All as cited by Dow, G. & Brand, I., "'Cruel only to be kind'? Arthur's Point Puer", *History of Education Review*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1986), p. 24.

Maria Island³¹⁹. Port Arthur was founded as a sawing establishment in 1830 with the first commandant of the settlement being John Russell³²⁰. Russell wrote to the Colonial Secretary in December 1830, mentioning the difficulty there was in supervising 22 boys in the trade of sawyers and asked whether he could teach the boys any other useful trade such as carpentry³²¹. In 1832 Arthur noted that he wished to know what religious instruction the boys were receiving and whether they were taught in the evenings³²². Commandant Mahon³²³ replied that the boys did attend school in the evenings and were progressing in their reading, but they were "somewhat exhausted" after their day's work³²⁴. James Ross described the Port Arthur establishment in his *Van Diemen's Land Anniversary and Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1831*. He believed that the object "...likely to prove of the greatest ultimate benefit to the colony, is the instruction of boys in trades...". These boys were sent to Port Arthur soon after their arrival in the colony,

...thus, instead as heretofore, of being spread through the country, where they only learned vices and irregularities, and formed connexions which eventually led in many instances to their ruin, they are taught habits of industry, and it is to be hoped will become capable of rendering essential service to the public, and of afterwards earning for themselves a reputable livelihood³²⁵.

The Assignment Board's recommendation:

The decision to segregate the boy convicts on the Tasman Peninsula was made with the Executive Council on 25 November 1833. At this Council meeting, Lieutenant Governor Arthur presented a letter from the Assignment Board, asking for the Council's advice upon the recommendations it contained³²⁶. The

³¹⁹Levy, M. C. I., *Governor George Arthur a colonial benevolent despot* (Melbourne, 1953), p.160.

³²⁰Wiedenhofer, M., *Port Arthur: a place of misery*, 2nd ed. (Port Arthur, 1990), p.7.

³²¹Russell to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 2 December 1830 in C.S.O. 1/483/10748, A.O.T., p.119.

³²²Arthur's note, 16 March 1832 in C.S.O. 1/483/10748, A.O.T., p. 221.

³²³Took over from Russell in July 1831. Wiedenhofer, M., *Port Arthur: a place of misery*, 2nd ed. (Port Arthur, 1990), p. 9.

³²⁴C.S.O. 1/483/10748, A.O.T.

³²⁵Ross, J., *The Van Diemen's Land Anniversary and Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1831* (Hobart Town, 1831), p.273.

³²⁶Executive Council minutes, EC 4/3, A.O.T., 25 November 1833, pp. 80-1.

Assignment Board consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Logan, Forster as the Chief Police Magistrate, Spode as the Principal Superintendent of Convicts and Thornelie as clerk³²⁷. They wrote of their concern for the sixty boy convicts housed in the Hobart Town Prisoners Barracks. On the one hand, the Board described these unassignable boys as a “dead weight upon the Government”. On the other hand, the Board also recognised the “evils” that came from the boys being gathered with so many adult convicts without any efforts to instruct or reform the boys³²⁸. The Prisoners Barracks housed convicts returned by magistrates as unfit for assignment as well as new arrivals³²⁹. The Assignment Board actually suggested that the boys, with any future arrivals, be sent to the Tasman Peninsula, they nominated a barn on Slopen Main which could be easily transformed into a Barracks³³⁰. The Board also recommended that a Schoolmaster and Medical Officer be attached to the Establishment, with the boys’ day divided between “work & useful instruction” and “Manual Labour with the Spade & the Hoe”³³¹. The Executive Council meeting was attended by Arthur, Chief Justice Pedder, Lieutenant Colonel Logan, Reverend Bedford and Colonial Secretary Burnett³³². The Executive Council recorded that it would be difficult to devise a plan for disciplining and reforming the boys as they were perhaps more difficult to manage than the adult male convicts. Nevertheless, they recommended that the boys should be sent to Slopen Main³³³.

³²⁷Ross, J., *The Hobart Town Almanack for the year 1833* (Hobart Town, 1833), p. 15.

³²⁸Executive Council minutes, EC 4/3, A.O.T., 25 November 1833, p. 81.

³²⁹Return of assigned convicts by J. Lakeland, Pricipal Superintendent of Convicts, enclosure 2 in Arthur to Huskisson, 1 May 1828, *H.R.A.*, III.vii, p.302.

³³⁰Executive Council minutes, EC 4/3, A.O.T., 25 November 1833, p.81.

³³¹Assignment Board to Colonial Secretary, 23 November 1833, C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp. 143-4.

³³²Executive Council minutes, EC 4/3, A.O.T., 25 November 1833, p.80.

³³³Executive Council minutes, EC 4/3, A.O.T., 25 November 1833, p.81.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

THE FUNCTIONING OF POINT PUER

The Point Puer establishment was founded on a peninsula facing Port Arthur in January 1834. The Commandant of Port Arthur, Captain Charles O'Hara Booth, had chosen the site in preference to Slop Main. Booth believed that he could manage the boys, "...much better, more securely, and with less expense" at Point Puer³³⁴.

Booth had a building ready for the reception of seventy boys on 24 December 1833. He informed Arthur that the boys would be safe from intercourse with the penal establishment, but to be more certain of this he proposed that a "line of demarcation" be made across the narrowest part of the promontory with a "...steady Sergeant and nine Rank & File" to keep guard. Booth concerned himself with all the details. For instance, he thought it was best for the boys to sleep in hammocks, "...as it will conduce in all probability better to their moral habits, cleanliness and regularity..."³³⁵.

On 13 January 1834 Booth acknowledged that 68 boys had arrived on the 'Tamar' three days earlier³³⁶. Booth also recorded the arrival of these boys in his private journal. He recorded,

Tamar signalized-found on board an increase of 21 Adults and 68 Urchins-on the way down the latter evinced their dexterity by foraging out in the Hold of the Vessel a six dozen Case of Wine for me, had abstracted all but one Bottle-some of which they had handed in to the Adults-the consequences a scene of general intoxication-some of the Boys and Men brutal...³³⁷.

³³⁴*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), 29 November 1833, p.165.

³³⁵Booth to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 24 December 1833 in C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp. 147-8.

³³⁶Booth to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 13 January 1834, in C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp. 154-5.

³³⁷*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), 10 January 1834, p. 167.

Booth gave the boys a lecture. Still, he optimistically mused,

The mode adopted by the Government in with-drawing these little Urchins from bad company and example will without any doubt, if proper attention is paid to their Morals be the means of bringing many-if not all-into the right path again³³⁸.

Arthur's involvement in the functioning of Point Puer also extended to details. This is illustrated by the debate between Booth and Arthur over the kind of rations the boys should receive. Booth provided the boys with an extra ration of tea and sugar each day than the standard convict ration. Arthur was critical of the nutritional value of these provisions³³⁹. The Colonial Surgeon's advise was sought and he agreed with Arthur³⁴⁰.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur appointed Mr Montgomery as the first Superintendent of Point Puer. He had been appointed despite his drunken habits. Arthur actually gave Montgomery a three month trial, asking Commandant Booth to report on his behaviour at the end of this time and stating that if Montgomery's conduct was not "strictly correct" and "proper", he could not stay at the Settlement for "one single day"³⁴¹.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur first mentioned the foundation of Point Puer to the Colonial Office in a despatch dated 8 February 1834³⁴². Instead of seeking the approval of the British Government, he had gone ahead and set up the establishment within two months of the Assignment Board's recommendations. The contrast with the delays in the establishment of the King's Orphan School is patent. In his despatch, Arthur stated that there had been an increase in the

³³⁸*Ibid.*, p. 168.

³³⁹Booth to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 13 January 1834 in C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp. 154-5 with Arthur's note.

³⁴⁰Colonial Surgeon Scott to Colonial Secretary Burnett in C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., p. 165.

³⁴¹Memorandum no. 16, 9 January 1834 & memorandum no. 17, 9 January 1834 in C.S.O. 1/693/15225, A.O.T., p. 240 & pp.244-5.

³⁴²Arthur to Hay, 8 February 1834, G.O. 33/16, A.O.T., pp. 277-84.

number of boy convicts arriving in the colony. He wrote of the recent arrivals that it was "...utterly impossible to imagine a more corrupt fraternity of little depraved Felons...". Arthur examined these boys and sought their histories³⁴³. Whether these boys were "thrown upon the world totally destitute"³⁴⁴, came under the "tutorage of dissolute Parents", or were the "agents of dexterous old thieves about London", Arthur felt that they were all the "objects of compassion". As it was impossible to assign them, he had ordered about a hundred boys to be relocated to the Tasman Peninsula³⁴⁵. He intended the boys to be separated from the adult convicts at Port Arthur, but by sending them there saved the expense of setting up another establishment³⁴⁶. Arthur enclosed a letter from Commandant Charles O'Hara Booth³⁴⁷. Arthur acknowledged how fortunate he was to have a person like Booth, who was "kind and humane - active and most determined", in charge³⁴⁸. Booth stated that Point Puer had already had beneficial results and was confident that it would reform most of the "misguided little creatures"³⁴⁹. Although Arthur delegated superintendence of the establishment to Booth, a passage in Booth's letter implied that Arthur had given particular instructions on the nature of Point Puer. Booth wrote that "His Excellency may rely on every Possible attention being paid to their Moral, Religious and Industrious habits"³⁵⁰. The management of Point Puer centred around these elements. This is illustrated by Booth's description of the boys' activities. He stated,

they commence and close their day with Public Prayer - attend School Morning and evening - and are also employed for certain hours clearing the ground in the vicinity of their new abode, until they become a little more organized after which I propose having them instructed in trades of different kinds³⁵¹.

³⁴³*Ibid.*, p. 277.

³⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 277-8.

³⁴⁵*Ibid.*, p. 278.

³⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 278-9.

³⁴⁷Booth to Private Secretary Turnbull, 6 February 1834, pp. 281-4 of *ibid.*

³⁴⁸Arthur to Hay, 8 February 1834, G.O. 33/16, A.O.T., pp. 279-80.

³⁴⁹Booth to Private Secretary Turnbull, 6 February 1834, pp. 281-2 of *ibid.*

³⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 283.

³⁵¹*Ibid.*, pp. 282-3.

The convict boys received at Point Puer in 1834 and 1835 were aged from 10 to 18 years³⁵². Point Puer operated until April 1849³⁵³, during which time it became the destination for all transported boy convicts. Over the whole period of its operation, most boys were aged 15 to 17, with the smallest group aged under twelve³⁵⁴. The establishment was altered with the introduction of the probation system in 1840. Under this system, boy convicts still tended to be sent to Point Puer, but the younger boys (those under fifteen) tended to stay longer than the older ones, who usually only stayed for a year before being transferred to other probation stations³⁵⁵. A major innovation occurred when Lord John Russell arranged for the transportation of juvenile convicts on a separate ship in 1836³⁵⁶. This ship, the *Frances Charlotte*, arrived in May 1837 with 140 boys³⁵⁷. Booth extended these boys' segregation by separating them from the existing Point Puer boys, removing the worst of the boys to Port Arthur temporarily³⁵⁸.

The management of the Point Puer boys revolved around a strict regime of education, religion and trade training. These were the reformatory inducements. Like any other form of secondary punishment, it aimed to reform, deter and punish. To these ends, there was also an attempt to classify the boys. By 1843,

³⁵²*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.32.

³⁵³*Ibid.*, p.62.

³⁵⁴Macfie, P., "The Point Puer lads and their prison, 1833-1849" in McLachlan, R. (ed.), *The Point Puer Database "The Point Puer Lads"* (NSW, 1985), p.7.

³⁵⁵Hooper, F. C., "The Point Puer experiment: a study of the penal and educational treatment of juvenile transportees in Van Diemen's Land", MEd thesis University of Melbourne (1954), p.137 & Hooper, F. C., *Prison Boys of Port Arthur a study of the Point Puer Boys' Establishment, Van Diemen's Land, 1834 to 1850* (Melbourne, 1967), p.26.

³⁵⁶S. M. Phillipps to James Stephen, 20 October 1836, enclosure in Lord Glenelg to Franklin, 28 October 1836 in the appendix to the Select Committee on Transportation, *B.P.P.*, 1838, vol. 3, p.214.

³⁵⁷*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), 19 May 1837, p.211.

³⁵⁸Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, enclosure 2 in Franklin to Glenelg, 4 August 1837, in appendix to the Report from the Select committee on transportation, *B.P.P.*, 1838, vol. 3, p.220.

they were divided into a general class and a crime class³⁵⁹. When the boys first arrived they were placed in the "labouring gang". This gang did work around the establishment such as breaking up new ground, making roads, splitting firewood, washing and cooking. All of the boys "more or less" were taught how to use husbandry tools³⁶⁰. If they behaved well they would be allowed a choice of trades³⁶¹. Booth described the type of trades taught in 1837 as those "...most likely to be useful in a new Country..."³⁶². Tailoring was the first trade established³⁶³. The boys also learnt to be shoemakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, nailers, sailors, coopers, bakers, kitchen gardeners and sawyers, book binders and turners³⁶⁴. Other boys were taught stone-cutting and boat building at Port Arthur³⁶⁵. These trades were useful around Port Arthur. For instance, boy carpenters worked on the Church fittings as well as furniture for government buildings, boy shoemakers supplied boots³⁶⁶ and boy stone-cutters cut most of the stone for the church and military tower at Port Arthur. Instructors were apparently selected from the more "steady" and "intelligent" convicts, those who were interested in improving the boys and had shown "exemplary conduct"³⁶⁷.

The boys' religious education was initially provided by Wesleyan catechists stationed at Port Arthur³⁶⁸. A full time Anglican catechist was appointed in 1837³⁶⁹. The Wesleyan missionaries had also supervised the Point Puer school³⁷⁰.

³⁵⁹Outward despatch, vol. 53, p.52 Comptroller General to Governor Wilmot, 20 October 1843 as cited by Hooper, F. C., "The Point Puer experiment: a study of the penal and educational treatment of juvenile transportees in Van Diemen's Land 1830-1850", MEd thesis, University of Melbourne (1954), p.24.

³⁶⁰Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., pp. 66-7.

³⁶¹*Ibid.*, p.68.

³⁶²Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., p.65.

³⁶³Booth to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 21 April 1834, C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp.177-8.

³⁶⁴Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, CSO 5/35/728, A.O.T., p.65.

³⁶⁵*Ibid.*, p.66.

³⁶⁶*Ibid.*, p.67.

³⁶⁷Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., p.66.

³⁶⁸Brown, J. C., "Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900 (Hobart, 1972), p. 26.

³⁶⁹Hooper, F. C., "The Point Puer experiment: a study of the penal and educational treatment of juvenile transportees in Van Diemen's Land 1830-1850", MEd thesis University of Melbourne, 1954, p.i. Hereafter referred to as Hooper's thesis.

The education was by repetition until a monitorial system was adopted with the completion of the new school building in 1838³⁷¹. Such a system was probably adopted to manage the increase in boys³⁷². Commandant Booth described the type of education the boys received in 1837. The boys were taught reading, writing and arithmetic. The method adopted was to divide the boys into two divisions, with subdivisions of classes. While one division was taught reading, spelling and arithmetical tables, the other was taught writing and ciphering. Learning on Sundays was devoted to reading and spelling as well as learning and repeating Church catechism³⁷³. The stock of books included the bible, new testament, psalter and common spelling book, with a small library of books donated by visitors and the Religious Tract Society³⁷⁴. The boys' schooling was conducted under the superintendent's inspection, with help from overseers and men attached to the establishment³⁷⁵.

The Quaker missionaries, James Backhouse and George Washington Walker, visited Point Puer in November 1834 at Arthur's request. They described the establishment in a subsequent report they wrote for Arthur. They discovered that the boys were educated for 2 hours every evening, but recommended that this might be better in the middle of the day, as the boys were tired after a day's work. The missionaries believed that the boys' diet protected them from scurvy and their general health seemed good. Turning their attention to religious matters, they reported that the Catechist had the boys attend public worship once during the week and twice on Sundays. Furthermore, every morning, before meals and in the evening he read Holy Scriptures to them and they prayed³⁷⁶. Backhouse and

³⁷⁰*Ibid.*, p.19.

³⁷¹C.S.O. 723 Booth's report to the Colonial Secretary, 22 June 1837 as cited in *ibid*, p.ii.

³⁷²Hooper's thesis, p.56.

³⁷³*Ibid.*, pp.64-5.

³⁷⁴*Ibid.*, p.65.

³⁷⁵*Ibid.*, p.64.

³⁷⁶"The report of a visit to the penal settlement on Tasman's Peninsula, in the 11th month 1834; by Jas. Backhouse & Geo. W. Walker", C.S.O. 1/807/17244, A.O.T., p. 55.

Walker provided appendices on such details as the daily scale of rations, the appropriation of articles for different meals and the boys' daily routine. The routine was for the boys to awake at sunrise, when they would fold their hammocks and blankets, wash themselves for the superintendent's inspection, say their prayers and work at field labour until breakfast was ready at eight o'clock. At nine o'clock they would be mustered for their various trades, at which they would remain until dinner took place at one o'clock. They were then mustered to their trades again, working until five o'clock. Supper was ready at six o'clock, followed by school from half past six until eight o'clock. Then evening prayers were said, hammocks slung, the roll called and boys again inspected by the superintendent before sleep. The Commandant visited the establishment daily, at which time any neglect in cleanliness would be reported to him³⁷⁷.

Commandant Booth provided Governor Franklin, Arthur's successor, with detailed information about the running of Point Puer in July 1837³⁷⁸. Booth stated that the management of Point Puer had not varied much since its original establishment. There were some variations in the boys' daily routine from Backhouse and Walker's account. These were that the boys' rose at five o'clock and had time to "amuse themselves" while washing before breakfast at seven o'clock³⁷⁹. They mustered for work at eight o'clock, working until twelve o'clock, at which time they washed themselves before being inspected. Dinner was at half past twelve, the boys again being able to "amuse themselves" between dinner and being mustered for work again at half past one³⁸⁰. They remained at work until five o'clock and had supper by half past five. The boys' ration was the same as the adult Port Arthur convicts, except the boys were given some raisins as an indulgence on Sundays. Those who misbehaved had their raisins forfeited to

³⁷⁷*Ibid.*, appendix G, p.65.

³⁷⁸Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., pp. 59- .

³⁷⁹*Ibid.*, pp.59-60.

³⁸⁰*Ibid.*, pp.60-1.

the well-behaved³⁸¹. The boys attended school from quarter past six until quarter past seven, and were watched at night by overseers. Only the misconducted boys worked on Saturday afternoons. All the boys underwent weekly medical examinations³⁸². The surgeon also examined the boys on their arrival and made daily visits to Point Puer³⁸³. On Sundays the boys attended a morning prayer, were given clean shirts and soap for the week, attended divine service in the morning and evening, with school for two hours in the afternoon³⁸⁴.

The boys' clothing was the standard convict apparel. They received two jackets, two trousers, two boots, two striped cotton shirts, one cloth waistcoat and a cap. Their bedding consisted of a rug, a blanket, and a bed tick or hammock. As their barracks was cold, well behaved boys could gain an extra blanket³⁸⁵.

There were four forms of punishment. The first was confinement to the muster ground after work hours combined with scavenger duty. The second was being consigned to a cell after work hours, eating and sleeping there, with no talking allowed, although school was still attended. The third was solitary confinement with bread and water and no work. The other form of punishment was on the breech³⁸⁶. The statistics Booth provided for the type of offences committed by the boys during the first six months of 1837 indicate that most boys were punished for having articles improperly in their possession, next most common was insolence, followed by "misconduct in general" and "profane or obscene language"³⁸⁷. Booth stated that serious offences were quite rare considering the

³⁸¹*Ibid.*, p.61.

³⁸²*Ibid.*, p.62.

³⁸³*Ibid.*, p.69.

³⁸⁴*Ibid.*, p.63.

³⁸⁵Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., p. 70.

³⁸⁶Booth to Colonial Secretary Monagu, 24 July 1837, C.S.O. 5/35/728, A.O.T., p. 71.

³⁸⁷Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 24 July 1837, enclosure 2 in Franklin to Glenelg, 4 August 1837, appendix to the Report from the Select Committee on Transportation, in *B.P.P.*, 1838, vol. 3, p. 222.

boys' character³⁸⁸. He reiterated his hope that most of the boys would turn out "...useful and worthy members of the Colony"³⁸⁹.

Under the assignment system, a monthly return to the Chief Police Magistrate showing offences and punishments, a return to the Principal Superintendent of Convicts showing the way each boy was employed and a half yearly report to the Lieutenant Governor on their general conduct and progress in school and trades all had to be sent³⁹⁰.

Lieutenant Governor Arthur visited Point Puer in April 1834³⁹¹, January 1835³⁹² and in April 1836³⁹³. Commandant Booth recorded in his journal that Arthur had "expressed his approbation" of Point Puer on his first visit³⁹⁴. He wrote of Arthur's last visit that he believed Arthur to have been particularly satisfied with Point Puer³⁹⁵. Arthur had written to Booth in May 1834 advising him to,

Keep in mind that these boys have been very wicked and that they are transported in order by their punishment that other boys may be deterred...consequently the mode of treatment must be such as is calculated to make them feel this...whilst every effort should be made to eradicate their corrupt habits³⁹⁶.

There was apparently more emphasis upon trade training and formal education as a means of reformation after Arthur's time. Even though Arthur recommended the appointment of a catechist who could also teach, he objected to too much time

³⁸⁸*Ibid.*, p. 72.

³⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p.74.

³⁹⁰Booth's 1837 report as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.119.

³⁹¹*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), 25 April 1834, p. 174.

³⁹²*Ibid.*, 18 January 1835, p. 190.

³⁹³*Ibid.*, 24 April 1836 & 25 April 1836, p. 197.

³⁹⁴*Ibid.*, 25 April 1834, p. 174.

³⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 25 April 1836, p. 197.

³⁹⁶Arthur to Colonial Secretary Burnett, 5 May 1834, C.S.O. 1/716/15655, A.O.T. as cited by Dow, G. & Brand, I., "Cruel only to be kind? Arthur's Point Puer", *History of Education Review*, vol. 15, no. 1 (1986), p.25.

being spent "instructing the boys in reading and writing". Arthur felt that one hour of school in the morning and another in the evening was sufficient³⁹⁷.

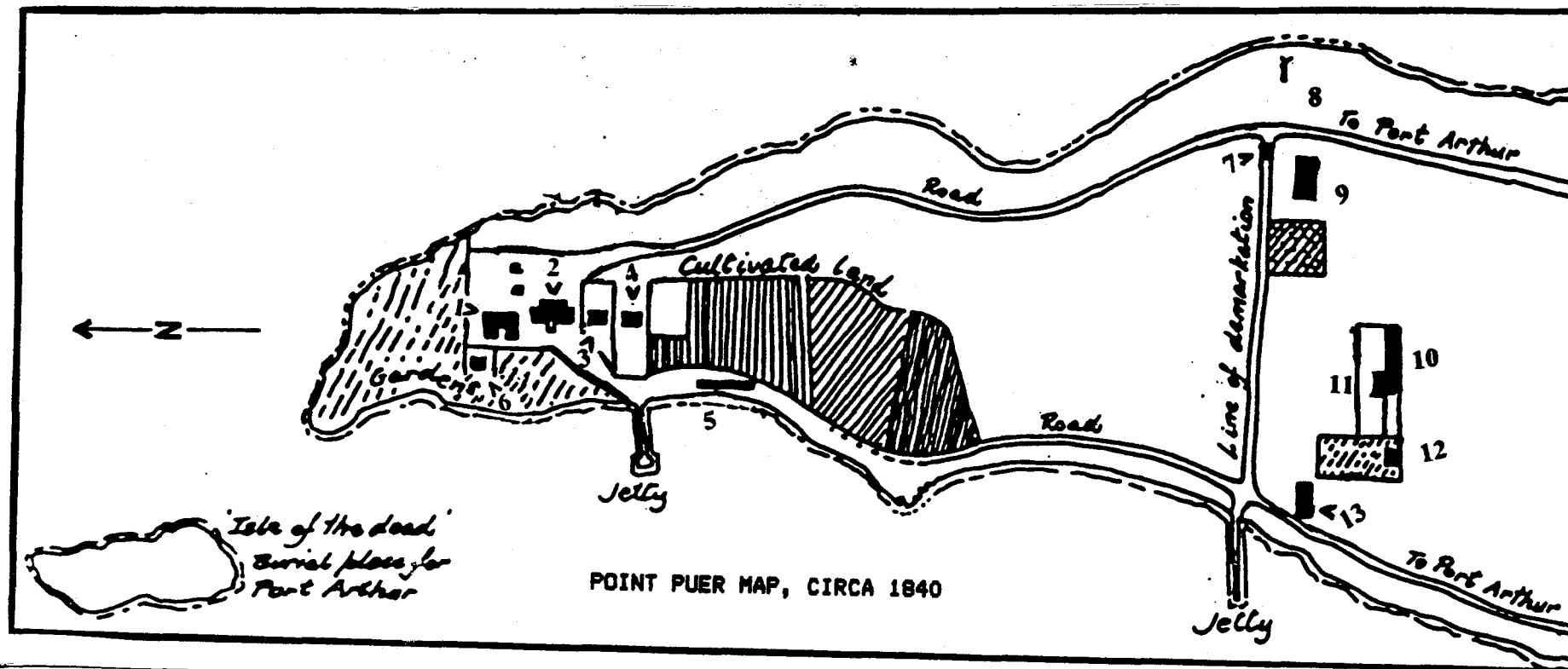
By the end of 1834 there were 161 boys at Point Puer. Some 111 of whom were labourers, 16 shoemakers, 12 carpenters, 10 tailors, 8 sawyers and 4 blacksmiths³⁹⁸. In April 1835 Booth submitted a list of 36 boys he felt "almost confident" would behave properly if assigned to settled districts. These age of these boys ranged from fifteen to twenty years. Booth admitted that they were generally not the oldest boys at Point Puer as, "...they are by no means the best conducted". If these boys could be kept at Point Puer a little longer, Booth believed this time would make them "comparatively perfect". Arthur approved of them remaining at the establishment for another 6 months³⁹⁹. The first 21 boys to become "free" were sent to Hobart Town in March 1836⁴⁰⁰.

³⁹⁷Arthur to Booth, 9 May 1834, Royal Society of Tasmania (Port Arthur records), 1836-46, as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.18.

³⁹⁸Statistical Returns, A.O.T., as cited in *The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.32.

³⁹⁹Booth to Colonial Secretary Montagu, 27 April 1835 in C.S.O. 1/690/15198, A.O.T., pp. 188-91.

⁴⁰⁰C.S.O. 1/509/11138 as cited by D. Heard, editor of *The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth* (Hobart, 1981), p.33.



1. Workshops
2. Boys Barracks
3. Chaplain's Quarters
4. Superintendent's Quarters
5. Sawpits
6. Exempt Room (sickbay)
7. Military Guard House

8. Semaphore (to signal Port Arthur)
9. Cells
10. Gaol
11. Exempt Room (sickbay) for Gaol
12. Gaol Superintendent's House
13. Proposed Additional Silent Apartments
(Solitary Confinement Cells)

Based on Kerr, J., *Design for Convicts*, p.119 and C.S.O. 5/35/752, A.O.T., p.281 by Macfie, P., "The Point Puer Lads and their prison, 1833-1849" in McLachlan, R. (ed.), *The Point Puer Database "The Point Puer Lads"* (New South Wales, 1985), p.30.

CHAPTER EIGHT:

THE FAILINGS OF POINT PUER

It is extremely difficult to assess how successful Point Puer was. Such an assessment revolves around how reformatory the establishment was. This could only ultimately be determined by an assessment of the fates of the Point Puer boys. However, such information is difficult to access as it is unlikely that any of these boys who succeeded in society would have wanted their background to be known.

Historians are only now reconciling the two contradictory views of how reformatory Point Puer was. One extreme is represented by Marcus Clarke's portrayal of Point Puer in his 1874 novel *For the Term of His Natural Life*. Here he vividly portrayed young children committing suicide by jumping off the cliffs. All the reader's sympathy is focused on these boys who were treated so harshly, "Just so! The magnificent system starved and tortured a child of twelve until he killed himself. That was the way of it"⁴⁰¹. No original source has been found which supports Clarke's account⁴⁰².

The other extreme is represented by John West in his 1852 *History of Tasmania*. West regarded the establishment to have been focused upon reclaiming and controlling its inmates rather than punishing them⁴⁰³. Furthermore, he found it, "an oasis in the desert of penal government". One reason he adduced for this statement was that,

...when the boys were submissive and diligent, they were not forbidden to be happy...Some became acceptable apprentices, were lost sight of as prisoners, and are now known only as respectable men.

⁴⁰¹Clarke, M., *For the Term of His Natural Life* (London, 1953), originally 1874, pp.297-300.

⁴⁰²Denholm, D., "The Sources of *His Natural Life*", *Australian Literary Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2 (October 1969), pp.177-8.

⁴⁰³West, J., *History of Tasmania* (Launceston, 1852), p.245.

West could almost have been writing about the children in the King's Orphan Schools when he wrote that,

The reformation of adults may admit of scepticism, and be tolerated as a topic of ridicule: but children, taught to steal earlier than to speak; who received the first lessons of crime on the lap of a mother; who never heard of God, but from the lips of blasphemers-or of right, but as the fair distribution of spoil, were surely entitled to compassion. The sympathies of man cast penal science to the winds, and scorn to preserve the inexorable temper of legal vengeance, to save the rich from peculation, by the moral immolation of infant robbers. They are orphans cast upon a nation's mercy; for though nature gave them the claims of children, she did not secure them an interest in a parent's heart⁴⁰⁴.

West's praise has a high value because, as the effective leader of the movement to abolish transportation to the colony, he would surely have criticised the Point Puer establishment if he could find any basis for doing so⁴⁰⁵.

An insight can be gained into the management of Point Puer by assessing the opinions of visitors. Lieutenant Governor Arthur encouraged people to visit the establishment. Quaker missionaries James Backhouse and George Washington Walker were impressed with the Point Puer system which they believed provided the boys with the knowledge and habits to make them honest and hard-working, therefore "useful", members of society⁴⁰⁶.

Another visitor who wrote an account of Point Puer was David Burn. He visited the establishment in 1842 and also praised it highly. He emphasised the constant surveillance of the boys and praised their instruction in trades for teaching them how to obtain an "honest livelihood"⁴⁰⁷. He wrote that by this means,

Infamy may be lost in industry, sin give place to grace, and transportation itself may, through the blessing of God, be the balsam of the reckless.....I earnestly hope, as I sincerely believe, that many will bless the hour they

⁴⁰⁴*Ibid.*, p. 247.

⁴⁰⁵*A.D.B.*, vol. 2, p. 590.

⁴⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p. 54.

⁴⁰⁷Burn, D., "An Excursion to Port Arthur in 1842" (Hobart, 1892), facsimile reprint (Melbourne, 1972), pp. 9-11.

saw Point Puer, which, under Providence, may prove the salvation (body and soul) of hundreds⁴⁰⁸.

However, as an official government visitor, Burn could be expected to praise the establishment⁴⁰⁹.

Two more reliable assessments of the settlement were provided by Commandant Booth and T. J. Lempriere. Both men were based at Port Arthur and therefore would have had much more detailed knowledge of the functioning of Point Puer. Commandant Booth appears to have been less optimistic about the future of the Point Puer boys than his official comments suggest. The French explorer Laplace reported a conversation he had with Booth about the Point Puer boys in which Booth admitted that he feared they would end up at the Port Arthur penitentiary⁴¹⁰. Booth saw room for improvement in the boys' education, religious teaching, rewards and punishments and the care taken of them once they rejoined the community⁴¹¹.

Lempriere, the storekeeper at Port Arthur, was more removed from the management of Point Puer than Booth. He wrote a book on the penal settlements of Van Diemen's Land in 1839, which was partly published in the *Tasmanian Journal of Natural Science* during 1842 and 1846⁴¹². Lempriere clearly saw that Arthur's establishment of Point Puer served several purposes. These were as an asylum for the boys which provided them with a means to earn a "respectable livelihood" and benefit the colony with their mechanical expertise⁴¹³.

⁴⁰⁸*Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁰⁹Macfie, P., "The Point Puer lads a reappraisal with the aid of a computer", *Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association*, vol. 33, no. 2 (June 1986), p. 51.

⁴¹⁰Laplace, C. P. T., *Campagne de circumnavigation de la frégate l'Artemise, pendant les années 1837, 38, 39 et 40, sous le commandement de M. Laplace*, vol. V (Paris, sometime between 1841-54), pp.166-9, translated by D. Heard in *The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth* ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p. 51.

⁴¹¹Booth to Colonial Secretary, 24 July 1837, enclosure 2 of Franklin to Glenelg, 4 August 1837, appendix to the report from the select committee on transportation, *B.P.P.*, 1838, vol. 3, p. 221.

⁴¹²*A.D.B.*, vol. 2, p.106.

⁴¹³Lempriere, T. J., *The Penal Settlements of Van Diemen's Land* (1839), (Launceston, 1954), pp. 89-90.

Lempriere was also perceptive in his criticism of various aspects of the establishment. He criticised the discipline for having basically the same “rigid coercion as the adult convict” discipline⁴¹⁴. He believed that this did not encourage reformation, but rather it encouraged an “esprit de corps” among all convicts⁴¹⁵. He recommended that there be no adult convicts, magisterial adjudication of punishment, or flogging. Instead, discretionary power would be best given to the superintendent⁴¹⁶. Each type of punishment was assessed in turn by Lempriere. He found that the boys particularly disliked being confined to the muster ground and long periods of being shut up in cells while still having to work, whereas punishments like flogging and solitary confinement for a short period were ineffective. The first was viewed as manly, and the second a good chance to sleep. He feared that magistrates were more likely to be harsh on the boys when every small offence was recorded⁴¹⁷. He also regarded the removal of boys to Port Arthur as too severe a punishment⁴¹⁸. Nevertheless, he realised that any kind of discipline would be difficult to impose upon boys “...whose innate depravity and turbulent dispositions exceed any conception”⁴¹⁹.

Lempriere also illustrated how the religious element of reformation could be unsuccessful. Religious feeling in the boys could almost “...border on fanaticism”. He told of how a group of boys separated to pray during Reverend Butters chaplainship (sometime between October 1835 and mid-1836⁴²⁰). He recounted how,

...at one time, much doubt of the sincerity of the religious boys, as they were called, was entertained. They employed their leisure hours in prayer

⁴¹⁴*Ibid.*, p 93.

⁴¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁴¹⁶*Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁴¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁴¹⁸*Ibid.*, p.102.

⁴¹⁹*Ibid.*, p.95.

⁴²⁰“Leger of Funerals” of Wesleyan missionaries at Port Arthur, records of the Committee of the Wesleyan Church, as cited in Hooper’s thesis, pp.72-3.

amongst the rocks and caves at the back of Point Puer, and in so loud a tone as showed an anxiety to be heard on earth as well as in heaven. Some even had visions. Indeed the religious enthusiasm of these boys whether sincere or not, was carried to such a length as to cause Mr. Butters to think it was necessary to restrain them.

The doubts proved to be well founded, although some "religious boys" persevered, many did not⁴²¹.

Lempriere also recognised that concern for expense was a shortcoming of the establishment. To contend with this, he believed that the authorities should focus upon the training provided for the boys and the alternative of "good-for-nothing boys"⁴²².

Lempriere shared Booth's concern about the fate of Point Puer boys. He wished assigned masters to be chosen cautiously, as otherwise the boys "...will return to their vicious habits, and a relapse may prove more dangerous than the original disease". Lempriere also appealed to masters to continue the boys' reformation⁴²³.

Another problem was overcrowding. Point Puer's peak year was 1842 when there were around 800 boys.⁴²⁴ There appears to have been a higher rate of reformation when there were less boys in the early years of the establishment. Overcrowding led to inmates being released earlier⁴²⁵. The higher rate of reformation could also be related to the management of Arthur and Booth. The historian G. Dow has

⁴²¹Lempriere, T. J., *The Penal Settlements of Van Diemen's Land* (1839), (Launceston, 1954), p.96.

⁴²²*Ibid.*, pp. 104-5.

⁴²³*Ibid.*, p.91.

⁴²⁴See table on p. 90.

⁴²⁵Macfie, P., "The Point Puer lads a reappraisal with the aid of a computer", *Papers and Proceedings of the Tasmanian Historical Research Association*, vol. 33, no. 2 (June 1986), p.54.

followed 22 boys of the 1835 sample provided to Arthur by Booth, and found that these boys had a lower rate of recidivism than later inmates⁴²⁶.

The buildings and site at Point Puer were also problematic. Effective classification was limited by the lack of planning for buildings⁴²⁷. The buildings were erected as they were needed instead of being well planned⁴²⁸. There were problems with poor construction of buildings also. For instance, the solitary cells did not work, as the boys could remove the wooden boards between cells⁴²⁹. The lack of palatable water⁴³⁰, firewood and rations meant that supplies had to come daily from Port Arthur. This led to contact between the boy convicts and adult convicts. Furthermore, the boys were publicly identified with Port Arthur⁴³¹.

The best aspect of Point Puer appears to have been the trade training. Even Benjamin Horne, sent by the British government to ensure that Point Puer was on the same level as Parkhurst, discovered that the trade training was better than that provided at Parkhurst, being only worse in agriculture because of the unsuitable land at the Point⁴³². Lempriere believed that penal settlements generally had the "cleverest workmen" and the boys had made "astonishing progress" under their instruction⁴³³. The historian F. C. Hooper attempted to determine whether the trades taught at Point Puer were likely to assist the boys' employment opportunities upon leaving. He discovered that some of the trades the boys were

⁴²⁶Dow, G. & Brand, I., "Cruel only to be kind? Arthur's Point Puer", *History of Education Review*, vol.15, no. 1 (1986), p.29.

⁴²⁷*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.60.

⁴²⁸Horne's report to Franklin, 7 March 1843, as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.24.

⁴²⁹Inward despatch vol. 43, p.337 Visitors of Parkhurst Prison to Graham, enclosed in Stanley to Franklin, 4 April 1842, as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.98; Horne's report to Franklin, 7 March 1843, as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.27.

⁴³⁰Lempriere, T. J., *The penal settlements of Van Diemen's Land* (1839) (Launceston, 1954), p.83.

⁴³¹*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.62.

⁴³²Horne's report to Franklin, 7 March 1843, as cited in Hooper's thesis, p.91

⁴³³Lempriere, T.J., *The Penal Settlements of Van Diemen's Land* (1839), (Launceston, 1954), p.90.

being taught were among the main trades listed in the *Hobart Town Almanack* of 1834⁴³⁴.

Fear of moral contamination by the adult convicts working at Point Puer led to attempts to employ free men during Franklin's governorship, but it was so difficult to find such people of good conduct willing to work there that the convict overseers were maintained⁴³⁵. Franklin reported that the few free overseers appointed were drunkards and one trafficked in prohibited articles⁴³⁶. Horne also found that the convict overseers had a bad influence on the boys, some inducing them to commit crimes⁴³⁷.

The interaction between adult and boy convicts could be harmful to the adults also. In 1842 an attack by the boys on a convict overseer resulted in his being hospitalised for three months⁴³⁸. In June 1843 two boys, "...not more than 14 or 15", murdered an overseer at Point Puer⁴³⁹.

Gaining sufficient clothes for the boys was another problem. In October 1836 Booth informed the Colonial Secretary that, "from the want of Thread, three fourths of them are at this moment almost in a state of nudity"⁴⁴⁰.

No boy successfully absconded from Point Puer. Although the boys occasionally disappeared into the bush, only three boys made it across Eaglehawk Neck before

⁴³⁴Hooper's thesis, p.123.

⁴³⁵*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), pp.52-3.

⁴³⁶Franklin Papers VI, as cited in *ibid.*, p.61,

⁴³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴³⁸"Extracts from the notes of an officer of the Convict Department, Point Puer" in Beattie, J. W., *Port Arthur the British penal settlement in Tasmania. Glimpses of its stirring history* (Launceston, n.d.), p.52.

⁴³⁹Booth to Colonial Secretary Bicheno, 1 July 1843 in C.S.O. 22/79/1739, A.O.T., pp.215-19.

⁴⁴⁰C.S.O. 1/885/18773 as cited in *The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), p.33.

being captured⁴⁴¹. In December 1836 two overseers were drowned in their attempt to abscond⁴⁴².

The education provided at Point Puer was criticised by Horne. At this time the school was supervised by the Catechist, with two convict schoolmasters and about 40 monitors from among the boys more advanced in learning. Horne criticised the Catechist's teaching abilities as he believed him to lack experience. He likewise criticised the monitors' lack of teacher training and moral and intellectual fitness to teach in advanced classes, as well as the fact that the schoolmasters spent most of their time trying to maintain order. The educational tools were also criticised, with most books being outdated, no maps and only one small blackboard which was rarely used⁴⁴³. Horne was also critical of the standard of reading, arithmetic and religious knowledge⁴⁴⁴. For Horne, such defective education meant defective reformation. This was so because he regarded education as "the great moral lever"⁴⁴⁵.

⁴⁴¹Hooper, F. C., *Prison Boys of Port Arthur a study of the Point Puer Boys' Establishment, Van Diemen's Land, 1834 to 1850* (Melbourne, 1967), p.8.

⁴⁴²*The Journal of Charles O'Hara Booth*, ed. D. Heard (Hobart, 1981), 18 December 1836, 19 December 1836 & 7 January 1837, pp.204-5.

⁴⁴³Horne's Report to Franklin, 7 March 1843, CSO 280/57/520, Brand vol. 17, as cited in Burton, F., "The Moral Lever"-education and teachers of convicts and free children at Port Arthur, and Point Puer Juvenile Prison Tasman Peninsula 1830-1877, PA Conservation Project for National Parks and Wildlife Service of Tasmania (1986), pp.26-7.

⁴⁴⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 27-8.

⁴⁴⁵Horne's report to Franklin, 7 March 1843, Brand, vol. 16, C.O. 280/57/520, p.29, as cited in *ibid.*, p.2.

THE NUMBER OF BOYS AT POINT PUER

YEAR	NUMBER OF BOYS
1834	66
1835	229
1836	270*
1837	210
1838	473
1839	
1840	700
1841	
1842	800
1843	716**
1844	634
1845	604
1846	
1847	350
1848	214
1849	162

Table by Hooper, F. C., "The Point Puer experiment: a study of the penal and educational treatment of juvenile transportees in Van Diemen's Land 1830-1850", MED thesis, University of Melbourne, 1954, appendix XI, p.188.

**Hobart Town Courier*

**Horne's report

other figures from blue books in C.S. files

CHAPTER NINE:
DID THE KING'S ORPHAN SCHOOLS LEAD TO THE FOUNDATION
OF POINT PUER?

There are many clear similarities between the King's Orphan Schools and the Point Puer establishment for boy convicts. For a start, their goals were the same. Both aimed to produce useful, moral citizens of the rising generation. Next, the language used in describing the two institutions and their inmates was similar. The children were to be saved from "moral contamination" in the form of "vicious", "dissolute" and "depraved" influences. The functioning of Point Puer resembled that of the Orphan Schools in its educational system and management. Even some of the failings in the care of children at the Orphan Schools were also experienced at Point Puer. Given such similarities, it is plausible that there was a connection between the existence of the King's Orphan Schools and the foundation of Point Puer.

While the positive aims of the institutions were to produce useful, moral citizens of the rising generation, the negative aims were to prevent moral contamination. Admittedly, the juvenile convicts of Point Puer were already contaminated to some degree, but Point Puer was established to separate them from the hardened adult male convicts they had been sharing the Hobart Town Prisoners Barracks with. Moral contamination of orphans and boy convicts was to be prevented by segregation. The "vicious" examples the orphans often needed to be separated from were their parents. Both institutions were very pragmatic - they were established to solve immediate problems. However, the management of the two institutions went beyond this. The Orphan School did not merely shelter orphans, it also looked ahead to the future of the colony when it attempted to ensure the orphans became upright citizens. Likewise, Point Puer did not merely separate

the boy convicts from the adult convicts, but attempted to reform the boys so that they too became upright citizens. Although the emphasis was very much upon the advantage this gave the individual child, it was not forgotten that society would also be benefited. Hopefully, the crime rate would be reduced, obedient citizens and skilled mechanics produced.

There are also parallels in the way the two institutions set about achieving their aims. The daily activities of the children in the institutions are remarkably similar. Both institutions revolved around religion, education and trade training. They were both very regulated regimes, with the boys in the Male Orphan School being punished in the same manner as the Point Puer boys for the same kind of minor offences. The eventual fates of the children were also the same. A large proportion were destined to be apprentices.

As one would expect, the language used to describe the Point Puer boys was much harsher than that used to describe the orphans. The Point Puer boys were "corrupt" whereas the orphan children were "poor little innocents". However, when speaking of the aims of the two institutions the parallels are obvious. The authorities aimed to prevent the orphans becoming like the Point Puer boys. Likewise, the descriptions of the backgrounds of the Point Puer boys were equivalent to descriptions of the orphans. Thus Arthur had described them as "thrown upon the world totally destitute" and coming under the "tutorage of dissolute Parents". The worst possible fate for the orphans was described in the same way as the Point Puer boys. The best possible future for the Point Puer boys was described along the lines of that of the orphan school children. There are also parallels in general management terms, with the children being "mustered", "classified" and "inspected".

Many of the failings in the care of children at the King's Orphan Schools were also experienced at Point Puer. The first trade boys could learn at both institutions was tailoring. It seems likely that the introduction of this first "useful" trade was dictated by the need of the establishments to decrease expenditure and become more self-sufficient. There is a parallel here with the establishment of the Orphan Schools and Point Puer. They were both established to fulfil immediate needs, but the government went further in its programme. The aims of both the Orphan Schools and Point Puer were often limited by an emphasis upon limiting expenditure. The successful running of the institutions was also impaired by overcrowding. There were staff problems at both institutions, with the authorities having difficulty finding respectable free people for the low salaries that were offered. At Point Puer the main problem with staff were their convict origins and lack of expertise, whereas at the King's Orphan Schools the main problem was with the abuse of the free Masters and Matrons.

There are also several reverse links between the two institutions. In 1844 the Orphan Schools were given to the Convict Department. This was justified by the Governor of the time, Eardley-Wilmot, on their changed character. He stated that,

The objects originally contemplated in founding the Orphan Schools were the protection, maintenance and education of the children of poor persons who died in the Colony leaving their offspring without the means of support in a strange country. In the course of time, however, the character of the Institution has been wholly changed; and instead of being a refuge for destitute Orphans, it has become an asylum or workhouse for lodging, clothing, maintaining and educating the children of convicts⁴⁴⁶.

The character of the institution had not been "wholly changed". Children of convicts had been admitted from the beginning. Another important link was the exclusive hiring depot set up for Point Puer boys at the New Town Farm, near the Orphan Schools. This was established in 1842 because of concern that the Point Puer boys sent to the Hobart Town Prisoners Barracks to await assignment might

⁴⁴⁶*Hobart Town Gazette*, 24 November 1843 as cited by Brown, J. C., "Poverty is not a crime". *the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.38.

have their reformation undone⁴⁴⁷. These boys actually worked on the Orphan School farm⁴⁴⁸, they would also have attended the same church as the orphans. Another link is that, with the changeover to the Convict Department, the head of the Orphan School also changed. The new head was none other than Booth⁴⁴⁹.

Two of Arthur's most severe critics, Henry Melville and John West, lavishly praised him for the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer. There can be no doubt that Lieutenant Governor Arthur was intimately involved in the care of orphan school children and the foundation of Point Puer. Even if the decision to establish the Point Puer establishment was as simplistic as Lieutenant Governor Arthur acting upon the recommendations of the Assignment Board, this does not explain the system that was established at Point Puer. Only Arthur's attitude, formed from experience, can do that. His experience of the King's Orphan Schools cannot be ruled out as a factor in the establishment of Point Puer, although it must be admitted that direct evidence is lacking. There was not really any commonality in membership of the Committee of Management for the King's Orphan Schools, Assignment Board or Executive Council apart from Reverend Bedford. He was both a member of the orphan school committee and present at the Executive Council meeting in which the Assignment Board's recommendations were presented. However, there are no records of any suggestions Bedford may have made based upon his experience of the orphan schools. The other link is Lieutenant Governor Arthur himself, but again, there is no record of any link he may have made between the two institutions.

⁴⁴⁷Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.62.

⁴⁴⁸Brand, I., *Port Arthur 1830-1877* (Tasmania, 1975), p.54.

⁴⁴⁹Brown, J. C., *"Poverty is not a crime" the development of social services in Tasmania 1803-1900* (Hobart, 1972), p.69.

CONCLUSION:

There is no direct evidence that the care of children in the King's Orphan Schools (1828-33) led to the foundation of the Point Puer juvenile convict establishment. Nevertheless, a study of the care of children in the two institutions does reveal much commonality in the care of vulnerable children and the failings of the King's Orphan Schools were to some degree the failings of Point Puer. However, it is likely that this was due simply to coincidence whereby institutions caring for such children are bound to be similar because of the similarities between their charges.

Had the links between the King's Orphan Schools and Point Puer been noticed and heeded better, perhaps there would have been an improvement in the management of the children in both institutions. In particular, some of the failings of Point Puer might have been avoided if lessons had been drawn from the Orphan Schools. As mentioned in the introduction, it is arguable that many aspects of Arthur's management of vulnerable children were more effective than those in place today. Perhaps it is not too fanciful to suggest that society and the Governmental bureaucracy of today could look at the lessons of the State's own history and learn from the care of its vulnerable children.

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